

THE MAKING of a HOUSEWIFE



BY LABEL GORDON CURTIS

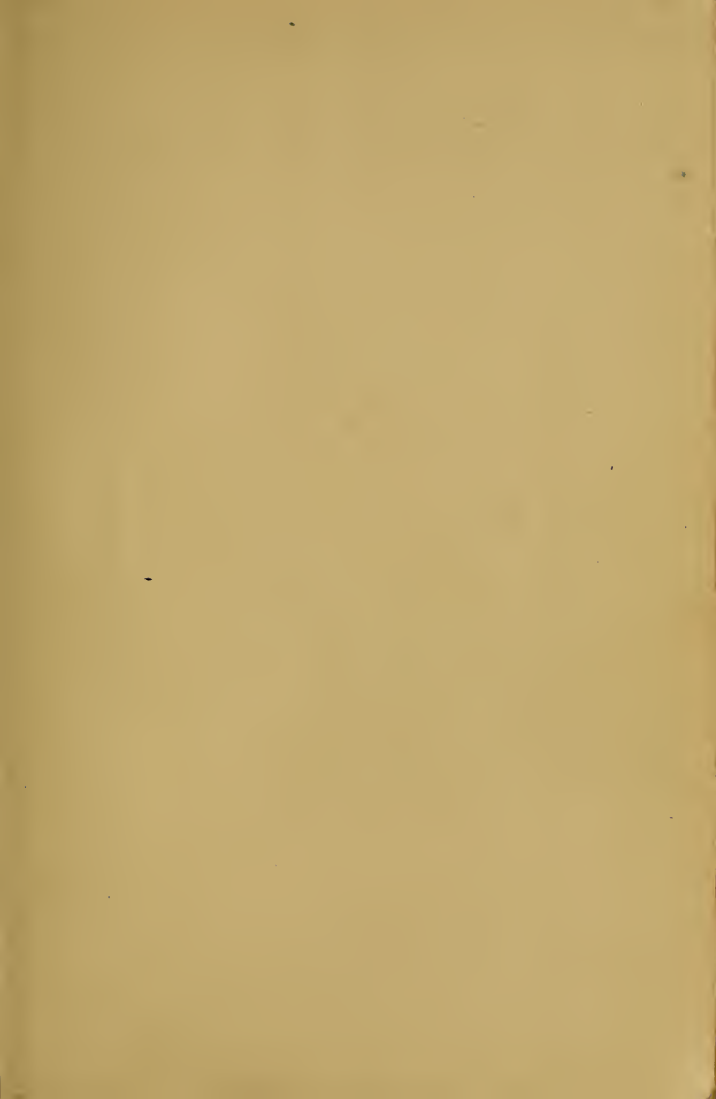


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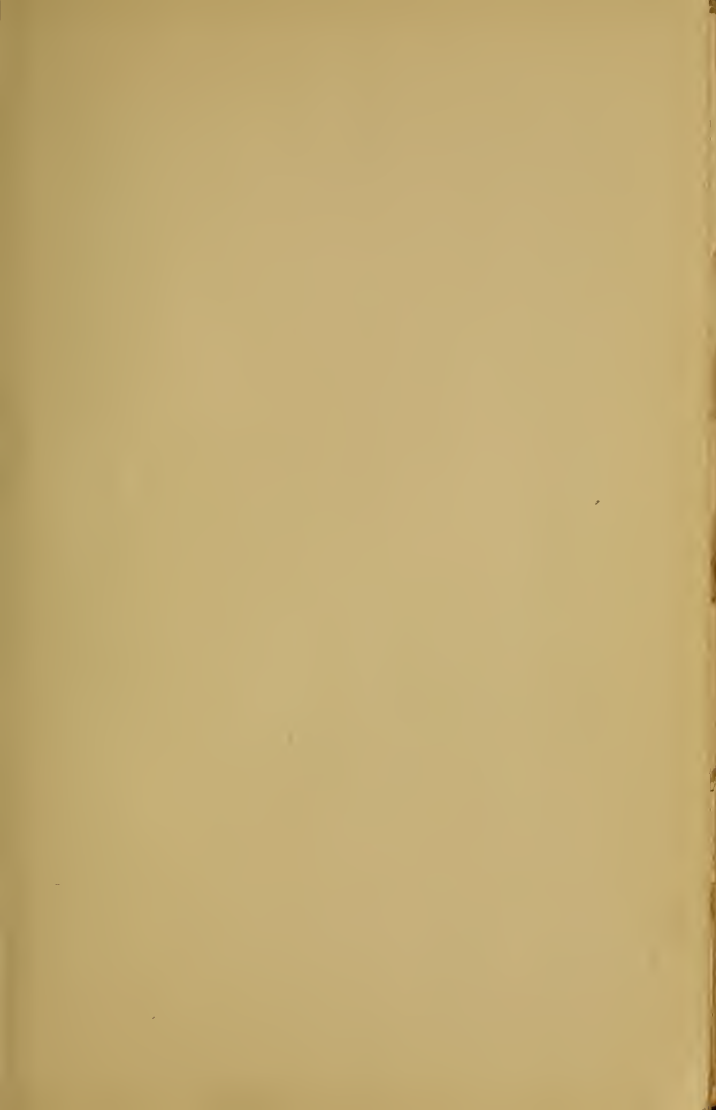
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P^{LATE XXVI.}—*A. Half a box of codfish was cut up. B. While Polly turned an egg-beater.*

**THE MAKING OF A
HOUSEWIFE**



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BY
ISABEL GORDON CURTIS

*With Sixty-eight Illustrations from
Photographs by the Author*



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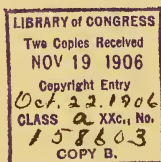
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To

MARGARET POLSON MURRAY

*To whom I am indebted for my first interest in
housewifery and appreciation of the
dignity of household labor*

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THE MAKING OF A HOUSEWIFE

I

A FLOOD AND AN INTRODUCTION

"MOTHER! Mother! Mother! Come quick!" shrieked a child's voice.

Mrs. Griswold was mixing bread, but she dropped her spoon and ran to the back door.

"Where's Polly, Norah?" she cried.

"The last I saw of her she was goin' into Mrs. Kerr's," answered a tall, sturdy girl who was mopping the entry floor.

"There she is now," cried the mother. "What can have happened? She's soaked to the very skin."

Mrs. Griswold ran bareheaded across the snowy yard.

"Come quick, mother," screamed Polly again; "there's a flood coming down Mrs. Kerr's stairs."

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She pushed past the dripping child into the kitchen, and was greeted by a young woman, who wrung her hands desperately. Water ran in streams from her clothing and hair; her face was white with terror.

"Oh," she cried, "thank you for coming. Everything upstairs is burst. See."

Mrs. Griswold followed when she dashed through the hall. A small cataract came roaring down the front stairs. It was already flooding the dining-room and parlor.

"Pick up the rugs, quick!" cried Mrs. Griswold. "I'll run down cellar and turn the water off. Give me a pair of rubbers."

Mrs. Kerr tossed her a pair, then she tore the wet rugs from the floor and threw them out on the snowy piazza. Mrs. Griswold, kilt-ing her skirts above her ankles, waded through the flooded cellar searching for the place where the water turned off at the main. When she came up, the Niagara on the stairs had been reduced to a trickle.

"Are the pipes frozen here?" she asked, turning to the kitchen sink.

"Everything's frozen all over the house," answered Mrs. Kerr, with a shiver.

"And a big fire roaring in the kitchen stove," the neighbor cried. She seized a shaker and dumped the red coals into the ash-pan.

"I built the fire half an hour ago to thaw things out."

"My dear, it's a miracle you were n't blown to pieces. The boiler and the water-pipes are frozen solid. As soon as ice begins to melt, steam is generated, and there would have been an explosion. I guess nothing saved you except that the ice being so thick did not easily thaw. Now, come home with me; we'll leave the house to look out for itself while I get you and Polly dried and warm. You'll both have pneumonia unless you are taken care of."

This was Mrs. Griswold's introduction to the pretty young bride who had moved in as a next-door neighbor a month ago. Mrs. Griswold had gone, a few days after the Kerrs arrived in town, to visit her father. Every letter from home told of a friendship

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between the new neighbor and her little daughter Polly. Already she had listened to one of Polly's fervent outbursts of admiration, and promised the little girl to call upon her new friend. So the episode of a flooded house proved their introduction. They laughed over it half an hour later, while they sat around a crackling wood fire in the Griswolds' sitting-room. Mrs. Kerr had suggested going home as soon as she donned dry clothes.

"You must n't, my dear," said her motherly neighbor. "There is nothing you can do. Norah has gone with a pail of hot water and a mop to wipe up the worst puddles, and bring things here to dry. I've telephoned all over town for a plumber. Nobody can come right away; pipes are burst everywhere; there is n't an idle plumber in town. Smith and Whitcomb have promised to send a man as soon as they can. Till he arrives you can have no fire there, and you would catch your death of cold. Mr. Kerr will be home presently. He will build a fire in your furnace. When the house warms up and dries you can go back."

“You’re very kind,” said Margaret. “If you had not appeared the water would still be pouring down the stairs.” She laughed nervously.

“Tell me how it happened.”

“Robert had a week’s vacation, so we went to New York for Christmas. We returned this morning. Rob had to hurry to the office. I built a fire when I got in; the house was so deathly cold I could n’t work. Pipes were frozen in the cellar and kitchen. Not a tap would turn in the bathroom; everything was frozen there. Then Polly came. She brought a pail of water from your house. When it boiled I took it upstairs, and stood on a chair to pour it into the small tank against the bathroom wall. I had just emptied the kettle when I heard a crack like a pistol shot. I think I was knocked off the chair by a rush of water from somewhere. It felt as if a hose had been turned in my face. I heard Polly shriek; the torrent of water struck her. I grabbed towels and tried to tie them round the leak in the pipes. It was no use; there was a hole there

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I could have put my hand in. Before I left the bathroom, water was rushing from the pipes in the tub and under the basin. I suppose it was because I poured in boiling water."

"Yes, that was the reason," said Mrs. Griswold.

"Why should it make the pipes burst?"

"When ice melts there is a quick expansion. This newly generated force has nowhere to go, the pipes are as full of ice as they can hold, so it blows a hole. I have watched a plumber melt frozen pipes. He lights a blaze of kerosene gas in a tiny lamp and sets it blowing all around a frozen pipe, moving it constantly up and down its whole length, so there is no sudden application of heat to any one spot. When our pipes freeze, Norah and I thaw them out with cloths wrung from hot water, wrapped around bandage fashion. The best way, however, is not to have pipes freeze."

"How can one help it when the thermometer stays below zero, as it has done for two or three days?"

"Turn off the water at night when the furnace fire dies down and a chill enters the house. Come to our cellar. It is planned exactly like yours."

Mrs. Griswold pointed to a row of stop-cocks just below the kitchen floor. Tacked beside each one was a card. They read: "Attic," "Bathroom," "Kitchen."

"These cocks," she said, "are now level with the floor, because the water is on everywhere in the house. If you should wish to shut it off, simply turn the cocks down, then run the water out of the pipes. A trickle from the stop-cock shows the pipe is completely emptied. If you were going away in the winter, and there was danger of the thermometer dropping below zero, turn it off at the main."

"What is the main?" Margaret asked.

Her neighbor led the way to a square hole in the concrete floor, where a handle seemed to come out of the ground.

"This is what I turned in your house when I stopped the flood," she said. "It cuts off the supply of water from the entire house."

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Of course, after turning this you must empty the pipes, also the kitchen boiler. The easiest way to empty it is to attach a hose to its tap and allow the water to run into the kitchen sink. This job we do twice a year to clean the tank. You would realize how it needs cleaning if you could see what Norah calls 'the emptyin's.' "

"The man who planned your house," said Mrs. Griswold, when they returned to the kitchen, "perpetrated the mistake which is being made by architects all over the country. He set the sink against an outer wall of the house. The consequence is that every cold snap freezes the water. We incurred four or five plumbers' bills one winter for frozen pipes; then we had the sink taken down and the wall behind it stuffed with asbestos. That helped a little; still, every cold night our only safeguard was to turn the water off."

"It is n't on an outer wall here," said Mrs. Kerr.

"No, indeed, although when we built this house, an architect planned a sink in the con-

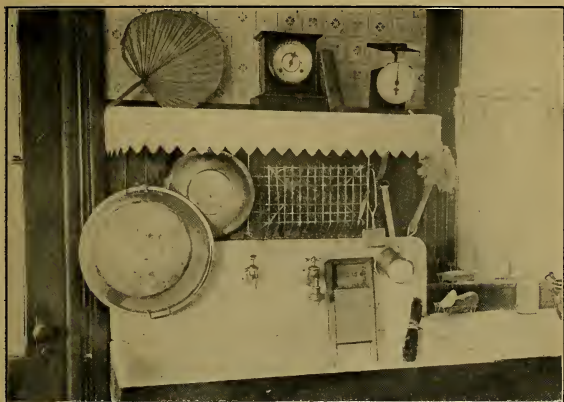
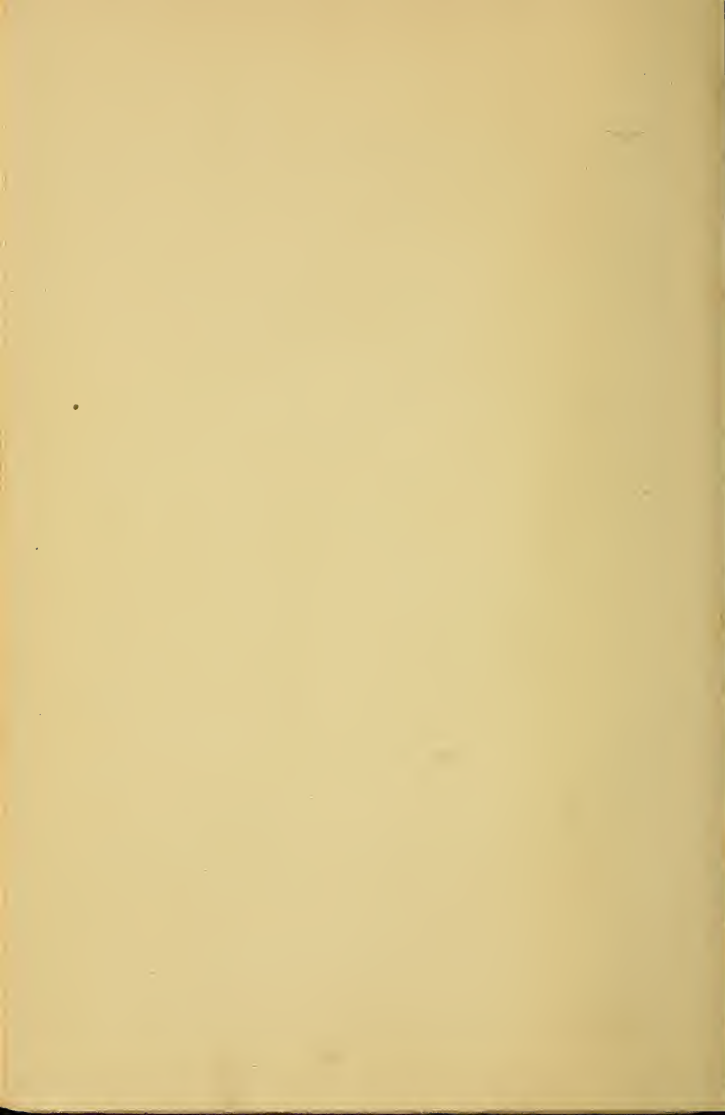


PLATE I.—A. Never set the sink against an outer wall. B. Cook-books won't teach everything there is to learn about bread.



ventional place. I had a fight to have it changed; he said he could n't find space for the stove or doors. I told him if we ever built another house I would have a woman architect draw the plans. Oh, dear, I had completely forgotten my bread."

"That is my fault," said Margaret, apologetically.

"It is not spoiled. I had not added the yeast. Do you mind sitting here while I mix it?"

"No, indeed. May I watch you?"

"Certainly, and ask any questions you wish, if you want to learn about bread-making."

"I do," said the young wife, earnestly. "I am trying all alone to puzzle things out in cook-books. It is n't easy when you have never seen anybody do the work."

"You are just learning to be a housekeeper, then?" said Mrs. Griswold, kindly.

"Yes, just learning. My home since childhood was with my grandmother in a big city hotel, except when I went to boarding-school and college. I don't believe I had been inside

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two kitchens in my life till I entered my own."

"You must let me help you," said Mrs. Griswold, heartily. "Polly says you're the neighborliest neighbor we ever had. You must let me be the neighborliest neighbor to you."

"Thank you so much. May I ask you questions about bread? I've read cook-books, but —"

"Cook-books won't teach you everything there is to learn about bread. I'm convinced of that. The author of a cook-book knows the science of yeast's leavening labor; she knows flours as well as a miller does; she has arrived at her knowledge of bread-making by years of experience and a multitude of by-ways which could not be put into a hundred-page volume. She boils down this knowledge into a recipe and directions which we follow time after time, making better bread each day, and puzzling out for ourselves the things the author of the cook-book could not tell us."

"Did you ever have a bread failure?" asked Margaret.

“Many and many a failure. I shall never forget one which happened when I was young and inexperienced, as you are. We had gone to housekeeping in a little flat at the top of a big apartment house. I set bread one day, but I had not patience to allow it to rise. I imagined the yeast was poor, so before I went to bed I added another yeast-cake, kneaded it, and set it in the pantry window. It was very hot weather, I remember. Early next morning the janitor came to ask what was dripping from our window. Down the red brick wall — five stories down — trickled a stream of bubbling white dough. My bread-pan held nothing but a few dough balloons. I remember my husband paid the janitor two dollars to scrape off the mess.

“But to the real practical side of bread-making. I began this dough by putting four tablespoonfuls of lard, two tablespoonfuls of sugar, and one tablespoonful of salt in the bread-pan; then I poured over it one quart of hot water. A yeast-cake I dropped in half a cupful of tepid water and left to dissolve.

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When the water in the bread-pan became lukewarm, I added five cupfuls of sifted bread flour and the yeast; then I beat it hard with a wire whisk, which mixes the flour and liquid perfectly. I added more flour till I had a spongy dough, which I turned out on the moulding-board and kneaded. Fifteen minutes is none too long to knead. Satiny smoothness and elasticity, such as the dough begins to show now, are signs of good bread.

“ Notice how I am kneading out all the bubbles that appear; if I did n’t, there would be holes in the bread. It is kneaded sufficiently, so I will wash the bread-pan, dry it, and grease it, even inside the lid. This prevents the dough from sticking when it has risen. If this were a warm day I should set the bread-pan outdoors and allow the sun to raise it. Being below zero, I will fill the dish-pan with hot water and set in the bread-pan, keeping up the temperature by occasionally adding hot water till the dough fills the pan. I do not believe in setting bread overnight. In the summer it is apt to sour; in the winter it may be

chilled. When I set it early in the morning it is ready to bake before six o'clock. About two o'clock this bread will be ready to mould. I will turn it out on the floured moulding-board and knead again, this time slightly, but till every bubble disappears. Then I will put it in buttered bread-pans, having each one about half full, cover it, set in a warm place, and allow it to rise till it doubles its bulk. Then it goes in a hot oven, which is gradually moderated. Loaves of this size take about an hour to bake. When they come from the oven, set them on a wire stand to cool, and brush the top of each loaf with melted butter, to give a tender, delicious crust."

"You added more flour," said Margaret, "after you had mixed a thin dough. Did you measure it?"

"There is a point where no more flour ought to go in, but I cannot give exact measurements. The wetting capacities of different flours vary. I tell by touch. When the dough ceases to be sticky, when it has a springy feeling, turn it out and knead.

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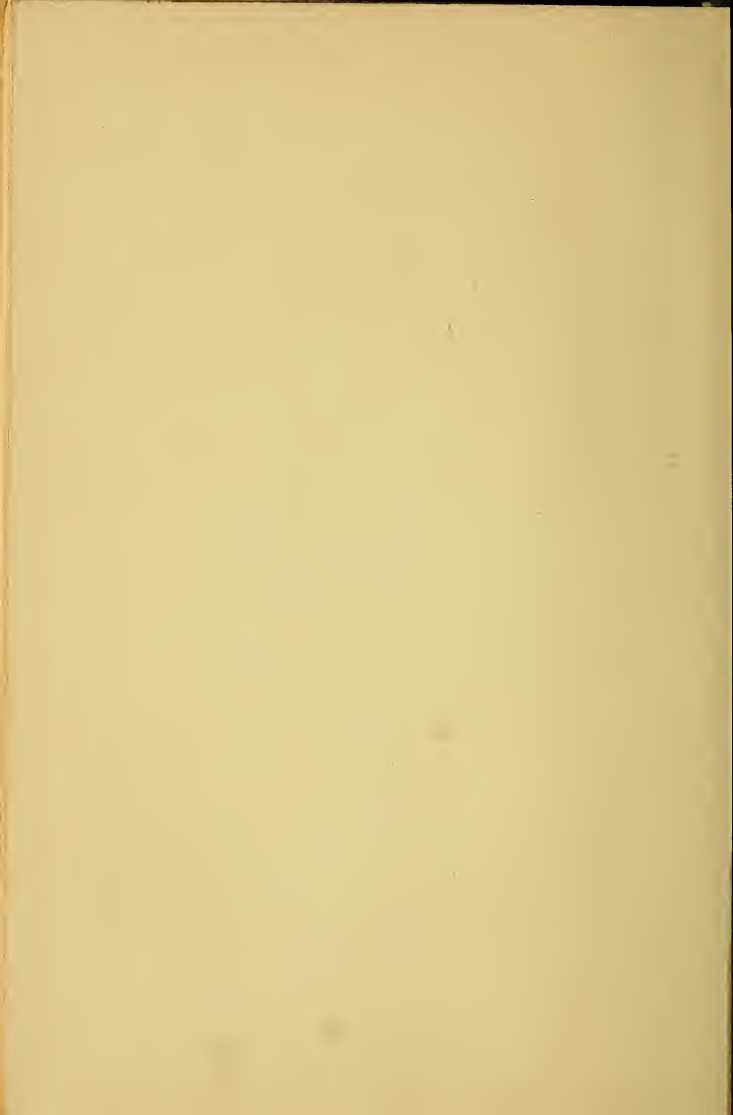
Knead, as you would dance, with a light, supple, dexterous touch."

"Does n't good bread depend greatly on the quality of yeast?"

"Yes, indeed; I have given yeasts of every sort a fair trial, but now I pin my faith to compressed yeast. The stale cakes are replaced in the grocery every day by fresh ones, and unless the yeast germ is killed by water that is too hot it is bound to make good bread. Invariably use bread flour when yeast is the raising power. Baking powder acts with fairly good results on bread flour, but combined with yeast, it will produce a sickly looking loaf. The wetting may be all water, as I used in this dough, or half milk and half water; or, if you wish a very fine-grained, spongy white loaf, wet with all milk, only it should be fresh milk. Any liquid you use should be as warm as new milk. One difficulty in bread-making is to know when loaves are 'just right' to bake. I tell by 'hefting' them, as a country cook would say. All at once the panful of dough seems to have lost its heavi-



PLATE II.—A. Set the loaves to cool on a wire stand. B. Knead dough as you would dance.



ness. Then — directly — pop it into the hot oven.

“There is an art for keeping bread after it has been made. Never wrap it in a cloth when it comes hot from the oven. That shuts in the steam and spoils the loaf. Store it in a large earthen crock with a tight cover, — a crock that is washed and sunned every time it gets empty. Ah! here comes the plumber. Now you will be all right.”

II

VARIOUS ECONOMIES AND A MENU SUGGESTER

ONE morning when Mrs. Griswold crossed the yard for a neighborly visit she found the young housewife wearing a worried look.

"It is n't poor bread again, is it?" asked the elder woman, cheerfully.

"No, indeed," said Margaret. "I baked bread this morning which was above reproach." She led the way to a desk in the sitting-room, where a housekeeper's ledger lay open with bills scattered around it.

"I fancied columns of figures would be no trouble to an accomplished mathematician like you;" and Mrs. Griswold smiled.

"It is n't that; I simply can't keep our expenses within our income."

"Perhaps I can help you."

"Robert earns twenty dollars a week, but it seems to go nowhere. Every month I've

been drawing on a little money I have in the bank."

"My dear child, you do need guidance," said Mrs. Griswold; "would you mind showing me where the money goes?"

Margaret handed her the open ledger. "It seems to go simply on things to eat. Our table bill last week was fifteen dollars."

"That is too much. There are six in our family, and I set a good table on ten dollars. Frequently it is less, but it never exceeds ten. May I glance over expenditures?"

"Certainly. I'll be so glad if you will tell me where I can economize."

Mrs. Griswold turned over the pages thoughtfully.

"You've been buying things that are out of season and very expensive," she said, slowly. "In February shad is scarcely within an everyday income. It comes from Southern waters and is scarce and dear. There are plenty of good, cheap fish in the market, — cod, haddock, halibut, smelts, and striped bass, for instance. Cucumbers and tomatoes are hot-

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house luxuries now. I even hesitate at paying fifteen or twenty cents for a lettuce at this time of the year. I don't feel I am getting the worth of my money. All winter long there are such good root vegetables, — carrots, parsnips, turnips, and beets, with, of course, white and sweet potatoes. Besides, there are brussels sprouts, cabbage, celery, onions, kale, squash, and spinach; then canned vegetables — corn, tomatoes, peas, and string beans — are very good and cheap.”

“None of these, except celery, can be used for salads.”

“I must introduce you to some of our winter salads. One favorite is greening apples sliced thin, with chopped celery and hickory nuts. Over it put a boiled dressing made light by whipped cream, and you have a delicious salad. If you wish to have this salad put on a company appearance, cut the celery into dice and heap in a glass dish; on it set small apples which look whole but which have been cored, pared, and cut into thin wafers. Fill the cores with mayonnaise, and into each tuck

a blanched top of celery. Nothing is nicer than chilled brussels sprouts with a French dressing. You may also have cold slaw or a regular cabbage salad."

"I cannot shred cabbage fine, no matter how hard I try."

"You must have a vegetable cutter. It costs only ten cents. It can be used to shave cabbage or to slice cucumbers or apples for a salad. I grate corn on it for succotash or fritters. Occasionally, during the winter, endive or chicory may be found at a reasonable price. They make delicious salads with a sprinkling of chives and a French dressing. By the way, when you are lucky enough to find a bunch of chives in the market, carry it home and put it in a pot of earth."

"I never heard of it," said Margaret.

"Few American housewives know its value. English and French cooks do, I assure you. It will keep verdant all winter in a sunny window, as parsley does. At a first glance you might imagine it was grass, but each tiny blade is a tube, like an onion top. Chives,

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although more delicate, belong to the onion family. A tablespoonful chopped fine is a delicious addition to a potato, lettuce, or endive salad; it also gives a pleasant taste to soups or hashed brown potatoes. As soon as it is cut it springs up again. One bunch of chives, well watered, will give you a winter's flavoring.

"But to go back to our salads. Celery by itself, with a mayonnaise, is delicious, or it may be mixed with shredded cabbage; then there is cold spinach, with a French dressing. If you get a good brand of canned tomatoes, in which the vegetable remains whole, drain off the liquid, then chill, and serve with mayonnaise. You will be surprised at how much it tastes like the fresh vegetable. Canned string beans or peas drained from their liquor make good winter salads, and nothing is nicer than a mayonnaise poured over the delicious canned product we call 'baby beets' at our house."

"I never imagined so many salads could be found in the winter."

"French dressing or mayonnaise will con-



*PLATE III.—A. Shredding cabbage. B. I grate corn on it.
C. A kitchen window conservatory, parsley and chives.*



vert many vegetable left-overs into delicious salads. Now, I am going to talk to you like a mother about your meat bill. My dear girl, chickens at \$1.50 a pair, sweetbreads at 75 cents a pair, lobsters at 25 cents a pound, beef-steak and roast beef at 30 cents a pound, are fearfully extravagant."

"There are so few things in the meat market small enough for two people."

"Wait till I take you marketing with me. Then in three weeks you have bought four pounds of lard, a quart of frying oil, and eight pounds of butter. That is more fats than you require."

"It takes so much to sauté potatoes and fish and chicken; then we had fried oysters and croquettes, and we often have French fried potatoes."

"You have used considerable bacon, sausage, ham, and roast beef; that ought to afford considerable drippings."

"Do you mean the fat left in the pan after frying? I never keep that; is it good for anything?"

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“ I have taught Norah to save every particle of drippings from a roast meat, and all the fat that rises on top of soup stock or liquor that meat has been cooked in. When a plateful accumulates, I cut the solid pieces in the meat-chopper, put it in a pan with enough cold water to cover it, and set in the oven till reduced. It might be done on top of the stove, only it makes a disagreeable odor, and splutters. When the water has evaporated I run the fat through a cheese-cloth laid over a strainer. Fat keeps better undisturbed; therefore, I pour it into several small jars and set them where it is cold. I never use butter for sautéing; it is not as good as drippings. We generally have on hand one or two quarts of such drippings. A pail of it is kept clarified for frying. We use the contents of the smaller jars for sautéing.”

“ How do you clarify fat? ”

“ When it becomes dark from frequent using, melt it, and add a few slices of raw potato. Let it heat till it ceases to bubble. The potato will absorb most of the impurities.

Strain it through cheese-cloth and let it stand till solid. Now, to return to our account-book, cream seems to get away with considerable money."

"It's so expensive," sighed the young housewife. "It costs three dollars a month, yet we've got to have it for coffee and cereals."

"A bottle of cream is an occasional luxury with us," said Mrs. Griswold. "I get plenty of good cream for the breakfast coffee by setting milk over night."

"No cream rises on the milk we get."

"Do you give it a fair chance? Perhaps you keep it too cold. Milk requires a fairly warm temperature to make cream rise. As soon as it arrives pour it into a shallow pan and set it in the pantry cupboard, where it is not so cold as the refrigerator shelves. Lay a plate over the milk to prevent it absorbing any stray odor or flavor; besides, the cream will skin if uncovered. Keep two milk-pans on hand, one to be emptied and thoroughly scalded each morning while the other is full.

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The skimmed milk left after creaming is just what you want for puddings, custards, sauces, and soups, for creamed dishes or for baking. Six cents' worth of milk ought to provide all you require of cream as well as milk."

"I wish you would tell me of something for breakfast instead of beefsteak and eggs," begged Mrs. Kerr. "They cost terribly, yet we want something good; we're not toast-and-coffee people."

"There are such a lot of things," said Mrs. Griswold, "none of which costs like eggs and sirloin steak. Eggs are 50 cents a dozen at present. Some of our breakfast dishes are frizzled beef in cream, codfish-balls, cream toast, beans with brown-bread, corned-beef hash, meat-cakes, minced lamb on toast, creamed codfish, sausages, hamburg steak, broiled kidneys, liver and bacon, pork chops, broiled salt mackerel, fried oysters, corn fritters, and fried smelts; indeed, a small portion of any sort of fish is less expensive than beefsteak or eggs in midwinter."

“That sounds like a hotel bill-of-fare.”

“Still, variety costs no more than getting into a rut, as some housewives do, and it makes the table much more appetizing.”

“Planning meals takes so much time,” objected Margaret.

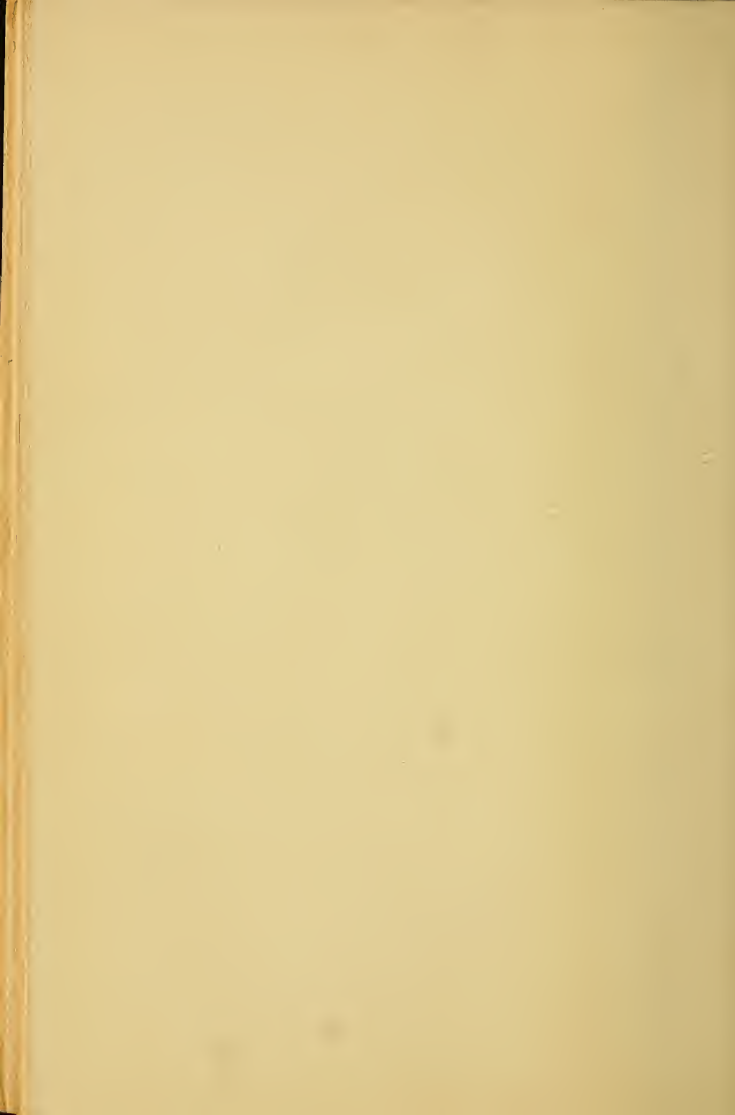
“I have a quiet little den in the third story where every afternoon I give an hour’s study to household affairs. On a table are scattered my household magazines, which are helpful and suggestive. On the shelf above my desk stands a row of cook-books, and two or three volumes on dietetics. I have my book of household expenditure in one pigeonhole, in another a file of envelopes containing things I clip about housekeeping, health, or entertaining. The contents of these envelopes are written on the lower right-hand corner of the envelope, so I can find in a second what I want. The subjects range from ‘Photographed Dishes’ to ‘Gas-Stove Cookery.’ The fifty or sixty envelopes are arranged alphabetically, so I can find what I wish in a second. Here I make up my marketing list

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for the next morning, arrange menus for the coming meals, and then I study."

"What do you study?" asked Margaret, curiously.

"How to keep a family healthy and comfortable. A teacher gives at least an hour a day to pedagogy, the artist and musician give half their waking hours to an art; certainly the well-being and happiness of a household are of equal importance. You never could imagine how much I have learned in one hour a day. I remember, years ago, I had poor luck with bread. Sometimes it was good, sometimes it was n't. I took up the study of yeast and flour; I learned every process that takes place in bread, from the time the flour is wet till it comes from the oven, and presently I was able to lay my finger on poor flour or unreliable yeast, or any mistake made in mixing, in raising, or baking. Now we have excellent bread. I cannot drum much science into Norah's head, but I have taught her every step of the bread-making process as it ought to be done. Another subject I mastered in the



quiet of my den was the meaning of a perfect diet.

“Years ago, carbohydrates, proteids, calories, and such terms, represented nothing to me. I was aroused one day by a lecture on how largely the health and happiness of a family lies in the hands of the cook and the menu-maker. I learned that a most appetizing meal might be anything but a well-proportioned one. I realized that only that noon I had set before my family an undue amount of starchy food in the shape of potatoes and macaroni accompanying a meat course, topped off with rice-pudding. To-day I give study to the menu of even a light luncheon, and I have the satisfaction of seeing a constant improvement in the health of our family. So much depends upon digestion, and digestion is more easily performed with correct food combinations.

“I think” — Mrs. Griswold’s voice grew serious — “no woman ought to begin house-keeping until she has acquired some knowledge of dietetics. The other evening our

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doctor was talking of badly planned meals and poorly cooked food. He spoke of one of his patients whose stomach is wholly at the mercy of an ignorant cook. His wife is a society butterfly. If she attended to her home it would be of little avail, — she knows less than her servants do about food or how to cook it. Dr. Grey said he had been doctoring this man for indigestion, but he seemed to get no better. The doctor dropped in there one day just before dinner, purposely. He was invited to stay. They had a fine beefsteak, which had been fried to a leathery crisp. While they chatted his patient bolted mouthfuls of this indigestible stuff — half chewed. Dr. Grey's talk to him is worth repeating. He said: 'If you had a half-dead fire and wanted to bring it back to life you would n't toss in a heavy log and expect the flames to devour it. You would split the log into fine kindlings; then you would have a blaze and the kindlings would be quickly consumed. There's a log of wood now instead of kindlings in your stomach, and as for fire, there

is no hope of kindling it.' Step by step I have studied sanitation, something of chemistry, food-products, drainage, ventilation, and subjects I might have taken up in youth if my education had been broader."

"They are of more avail than if you had studied them in your girlhood," said Margaret.

"Yes, that is true, because now I put my study into everyday practice; then I could not have done it. Before I say good-by I must not forget to tell you about what I call my menu-suggester. It is made of six or eight sheets of thin card tied together. The outside card bears a heading, 'Breakfast.' Under it goes a list of breakfast breads, popovers, waffles, muffins of every sort, corn-bread, and griddle-cakes. Opposite each line goes a numeral, — 1, 2, or 0. That stands for the number of eggs required in the recipe; for sometimes the egg-basket is flush, sometimes it is empty. On the next page are listed such dishes as I mentioned to you, which may be used as the basis of a breakfast. Then comes a luncheon card bearing a variety of savory

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dishes, many of them a toothsome and economical reserving of left-overs of meat, fish, or poultry. There are five dinner cards. One enumerates favorite soups in our household, from a consommé to clam-chowder; the next is a list of meats and ways for cooking them; another has vegetables served in many ways; then salads and desserts. Each card holds fifty or sixty dishes."

III

A LESSON AT THE MEAT MARKET

ONE spring-like morning Margaret Kerr opened the back door in answer to a knock.

Outside stood Mrs. Griswold with a large basket on her arm.

"I'm on my way to market. Can't you go with me?"

"I have n't washed the dishes or done my morning's work," answered Margaret, regretfully.

"Leave everything," advised her neighbor. "Toss back the bedclothes and open the windows. The walk will do you good; besides, you may learn something."

"I'll come," said the young woman, eagerly.

"Have you a market basket?"

"Yes," Mrs. Kerr hesitated, "but it is such a clumsy affair. Blank will send home everything I order."

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"When we get down town you will find women who move in what we call the best society carrying market baskets. Perhaps they take them home in their carriages instead of on a street car, as I do, but you may be sure of one thing, — they are good housekeepers."

"Why do you carry your marketing home?" asked Mrs. Kerr, while she stopped to lock the front door.

"I once knew an old lady who distrusted human nature; so she carried a rubber stamp to market, and whether it was a chicken, a roast, or a basket of grapes she purchased, her name was stamped on it."

"So she would get what she chose?" asked Mrs. Kerr, laughing.

Her neighbor nodded. "Exactly, but I carry a basket. Even if my marketman brings what I choose, there is the advantage of rapid transit. Living as we do in the suburbs, a wagon is three or four hours *en route*. During that time lettuce, parsley, or cress become wilted in hot weather or frost bitten in winter;

while strawberries, peaches, or any soft fruit, are not improved by a jolting journey and a fierce sun. Besides, a meal will not be delayed while waiting for the delivery team. One day last week I waited till half-past eleven; then I was compelled to serve a makeshift dinner of frizzled beef with the vegetables which accompany roast lamb."

"Where do you market?" asked Margaret, as they left the main street for a thoroughfare that led to the river.

"I patronize a small market in a most unfashionable quarter of the city," said Mrs. Griswold. "It is kept by an old Frenchman and his son. They are experts on cutting and trimming meat. The place is fastidiously clean. Meat, fish, and fruit are never at the mercy of dirt or flies. On this out-of-the-way street rents are low. My butcher employs no help outside the family, so he can afford to take smaller profits. Few of the richer class deal here; therefore one can frequently find at quite reasonable prices such titbits as calves' liver, sweetbreads, or a tongue, which in the

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big markets are ordered ahead and almost impossible to get."

"I market by ordering from the clerk," Margaret confessed, "or Rob telephones from the office."

"There are exemplary clerks and exemplary butchers who will send you the best they have, but they are rare. Besides, the study of a counter always reveals something good and cheap which you would not have remembered at home. Meat has risen so in price during the past few years that roasts, steaks, and chops, on which the average housewife depends, make a meat bill large. But there are other things besides lamb chops, porterhouse steak, or a roast, which by careful cooking become very savory. I will show you some of the cuts I mean, for here we are at the market."

"It actually smells clean," exclaimed Margaret.

"If you have a side of beef in the refrigerator," said Mrs. Griswold to the marketman, "may we look at it? I have brought you a



PLATE V.—A. It actually smells clean. B. The lower part of the round.



new customer. I want to teach her about cuts."

"Yes, indeed, ma'am," said the man in the white apron. "I will cut it in two; you may then get a better idea of the grain of the meat."

"This is half of a young, well-fed animal. The meat, which at first was reddish purple, is fast changing to a bright red, while the fat is a wholesome creamy white color. It has a juicy appearance, that tells it has hung long enough to become well ripened. These are sure signs of excellent beef. When one begins to consider cuts of meat, their price, their tenderness, or toughness, you have to imagine the animal on its feet, wandering around in search of food. Like every other creature of flesh, blood and bone, it has a wonderful network of muscles. Some of these muscles get little usage, others work overtime. Therefore, we find the tenderest pieces where the body has had little exercise, — the flesh on top of the back, the loin or porterhouse, the seven prime ribs, as a butcher calls them, and the

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thick sirloin, — cuts which are best adapted for broiling or roasting. Near the neck you find the chuck ribs and shoulder, beside the tail the rump, then we come down to the round and leg, portions of the animal which abound in muscle. Where sinews are abundant and the flesh has a coarse grained appearance, different methods of cooking must be resorted to; if broiled or roasted it would be almost impossible to chew. It should be subjected to such slow cooking as braising, simmering at just below the boiling point, or pot-roasting. The nearer one approaches the hoof of the animal, the better is the meat suited for soup-making. The tendons of the shin are rich in gelatine, and when dissolved by long, slow cooking, give flavor and consistency to the soup. The butcher assures me he has to cut up this side of beef for the day's trade. It will give you a complete idea of the different cuts, with their food value and their price."

Margaret was thoroughly interested. "Won't you tell me the cuts from one end of the quarter to the other?" she asked.

“The piece of shin,” explained Mrs. Griswold, “from this quarter makes excellent soup. The meat is of better flavor, and the bone contains finer marrow than the fore quarter. Farther up is the round; from the top of it, in such tender beef as this, you can get a very good steak. Pound it lightly, then lay it for two or three days in the refrigerator with salad oil poured over it, and you will have a rarely fine steak, ‘marinated,’ as a chef calls it. This is the secret of many a fine hotel steak that you find hard to classify. Next comes the rump, from which roasts or stews are cut. Then the sirloin, in which we find fine roasts and porterhouse steaks. From this part is cut the tenderloin, — a fine, tender strip of meat lying inside the bone. This bit of the creature does not receive the slightest exercise. It is a delicate morsel, which sells for sixty or seventy-five cents a pound, and is usually larded, then roasted or broiled. Although deliciously tender, it does not possess the flavor and nourishment of a cheaper piece of steak.

“Now we come to the fore-quarter, which

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begins at the five prime ribs for roasting. Close to them lie the five chuck ribs, excellent bits for stews and small steaks. The neck is generally converted into hamburg steak, while the under part of the animal, which includes the flank, the plate, the navel, and brisket, are corned. Here is the shoulder clod, — no cut can excel it in juiciness or flavor when a pot-roast or beef *à la mode* is desired.”

“You promised,” suggested Margaret, “to tell me of cuts which were economical for a small family.”

“There are many. We will leave porter-house and sirloin steak out of the question; you know about them. A pound of steak from the top of the round, marinated as I suggested, and broiled, will give you an excellent dinner. A cheaper piece of round steak chopped and broiled is delicious as hamburger steak, or when baked it makes a savory ‘cannelon.’ A cut of three pounds from the rump may be braised, and is quite appetizing cold as well as hot. A pound of rump or round steak will make a delicious little stew,

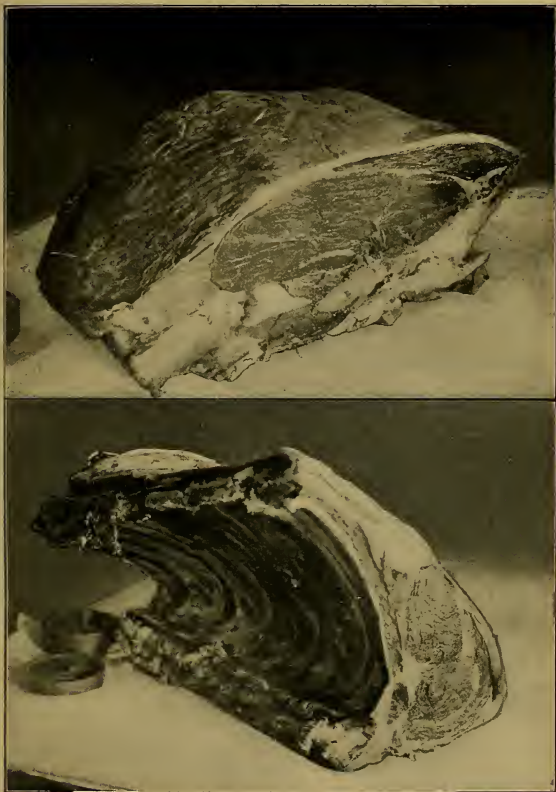


PLATE VI.—A. The chuck roast. B. The sirloin.



while a braised or boiled tongue affords one hot meal and several lunch dishes. An ox-tail is delicious fricasseed or in soup.

“A sheep’s liver is as highly esteemed in England as calf’s liver is here. In American markets it is almost given away. If liver looks cloudy and a heart or kidneys have a streaky, spotted appearance, you may be very sure they are diseased and will make dangerous food. When well nourished and healthy they are smooth, red, and juicy. A calf’s heart is a most appetizing dish, larded, stuffed with a well-seasoned dressing, roasted, and served with a rich, brown gravy. Pot-roasting converts a number of cheap cuts into excellent dishes. Among these I may enumerate the juicy, lean cross rib, and a solid piece from the lower part of the round or face of the rump. Two pounds of flank, which costs ten cents a pound, is delicious cooked *à la Milanaise*. Roll the meat, sauté it brown, season well, and braise slowly for two hours, with enough water to make a good gravy.

“There is a knack in knowing how to pick

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out a soup bone as well as knowing how to cook it. It ought to be two-thirds meat, one-third bone and fat. The plan I follow in winter with soup-making for our large family is to purchase two pieces of shin, one meat, another bone and gristle. It is cooked very slowly. When tender, I take the meat, separating it from the bone and gristle, which continues cooking till all the good has been extracted. The meat makes a good hash or stew; indeed, it is not to be despised for croquettes. Forty cents' worth of shin yields four nourishing meals in the shape of stew, hash, or a galantine.

“A pound of cutlets, breaded and sautéd, are cheap and delicious, or veal from the loin may be fricasseed and enriched by brown sauce. Veal loaf, hot or cold, is a very nice dish. When one comes to pork, I believe in eating it only once in a great while, then in cold weather, when fat food is required to warm the body. It is a good idea to regulate the use of pork, — excepting ham and bacon, — as we do oysters, to the months which have

an 'r' in them. Pork chops, or pork tenderloin, are more suitable than a roast for your family. Tiny, well-spiced sausages are delicious and make a nice breakfast dish. There is one rule about using pork,—it must be thoroughly cooked; it is actually dangerous when rare."

"You have not mentioned lamb or mutton," Margaret suggested, after they had done their ordering and put the purchases in their baskets.

"No, because I am going to give my last order for a hind-quarter of mutton. Show me one, please," she added to the butcher.

"Here is a good side," he said. "It has hung two weeks and is finely flavored."

"This is remarkably nice mutton," said Mrs. Griswold. "Notice how small the bones are; the flesh is red and fine grained, while the fat is firm and white."

"You will not carry this in your basket?" questioned Margaret.

"No, indeed," Mrs. Griswold laughed. "I'll let them send it home. Come over

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after dinner. I will cut it up and show you how economical it is to buy mutton in this way."

Mrs. Kerr watched with eager interest her neighbor's manipulation of a hind-quarter of mutton. She stood at the kitchen table with the quarter of mutton before her, and a meat saw, a cleaver and butcher's knife at her elbow.

"Were n't these tools expensive?" Margaret asked.

"They cost several dollars ten years ago, but I have saved the price of them many times by purchasing mutton in a quarter, probably once a fortnight during the winter."

Mrs. Griswold cut what she required as deftly as the butcher could have done.

"The first part I use, you see, is the flank," said the housewife. "Its keeping qualities are not quite as good as other parts of the quarter. With the flank I cut the small end of the ribs, leaving the loin chops and the rib quite short. I will take off eight chops for dinner to-night, then in the cold pantry I will hang up the leg



PLATE VII.—A. A braised tongue. B. Lamb chops.



with half a dozen chops left, four of them prime cuts from the leg. It will keep well for two weeks. We will have another dinner of chops, then the leg braised or roasted. The flank I have just cut off will make several quarts of fine mutton stock. This I pour into three or four pails and set away on a cold shelf to be used as we need it."

"Why don't you put it in one large jar?"

"Because we would not use all the stock at one meal, and the remainder would spoil if the cake of fat was broken. The fat on top of the stock keeps the air out, just as a layer of paraffin preserves jelly. The stock is strained into a pail and cooled as quickly as possible."

"Why are some chops so much more costly than others?" asked Mrs. Kerr.

"They come from different parts of the animal, and for the weight lost in trimming a customer is charged. The eight ribs are cut into chops and called rib chops. The meat which lies between these ribs and the leg is cut into slices we call loin chops. On chops, a leg

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of mutton, the forequarter, or any other part of sheep's flesh, always pare away carefully the outside, fatty skin. If this is allowed to stay on you have the unpleasant woolly taste which often spoils lamb or mutton."

IV

PLANNING A WEEK'S WORK, AND WASH-DAY

"Is N'T it delightful to have piazza weather arrive?" called Mrs. Griswold to her neighbor one afternoon in April. She was bringing out rockers which had had a long, dusty rest in the attic.

"It is pleasant." Margaret dropped into a chair with a sigh. "Dear! I quite sympathize with anybody who called the second day of the week 'Blue Monday' (I should add Blue Tuesday). I get so tired before I finish laundry work I could drop."

"You had a big washing yesterday."

"It was big and hard," agreed Mrs. Kerr.

"Have you ever noticed that we do not wash on Monday?"

"Yes; I've wondered why."

"Because it simplifies labor. I don't understand why all the world chooses Monday for

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wash-day. I used to do it, until I decided to try Tuesday, — then I never went back to Monday.”

“Why, is it easier?” Margaret asked eagerly.

“If one sweeps on the traditional Friday, a house is apt to get untidy and dirty before the beginning of the week.”

“It does,” agreed her neighbor. “I never touched my washing yesterday till ten o’clock. Rob’s shirts and collars had to be picked up for the laundry. There were cigar ashes everywhere, Sunday newspapers were littered about; there was such a muss.”

“It is so in nearly every household. All the members of a family are home Sunday, with liberty to do as they please — and — men folks are not tidy.”

“No, indeed,” laughed Margaret.

“Suppose you try my system next week and see how it goes. On Monday morning, after the breakfast dishes have been washed, Norah and I tidy the house, sweeping a bit here, running the carpet-sweeper around there, dusting

and throwing out withered flowers. Then we change the bed-linen and towels and gather the soiled clothes. Generally, on Sunday, pies and cake have been consumed, so we do baking enough to tide over Tuesday and Wednesday. After luncheon I take my sewing-basket and piece-bag and look over soiled clothes for tears and thin spots. Frequently in a tablecloth or sheet I find a place which can be quickly strengthened by a darn or patch. If I had left it to go in the wash untouched there would have been a hole that meant a half-hour's work. If possible, I save time by sewing patches on the machine; with a little practice it can be done neatly. I always mend breaks in woven underwear by the machine. I pull the tear or hole together and baste on the wrong side a bit cut from an old shirt. Then it is easy to tack down the torn edges and run it around on the machine, making the stitch large and loose, so it will give with a strain. I follow the same plan with a thin place, setting the stitch across in step-ladder fashion. This treatment will make undergarments wear twice

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as long, especially if they are mended before the wringer and the washboard play havoc with them. I also look over the clothes for fresh stains. When they have been fixed by soap it is impossible to tell the nature of a stain. Cold water or milk never fixes a stain, so I try these first. I treat iron rust to salt and lemon, then give it a sun bath. Alcohol removes grass or iodine stains. For tea, coffee, or fruit stains I spread the article over a bowl and pour boiling water through it. If it is a wine stain, the same method will take it out, the spot having been first covered with salt."

"I am glad to know this; some of my beautiful new tablecloths have all sorts of marks on them."

"Most stains will yield to simple treatments. If they do not, soak them with javelle water, then rinse."

"What is javelle water?"

"The most effective of all cleaning fluids, also the cheapest, — a gallon of it costs only a few cents. Dissolve one pound of sal-soda in a quart of hot water and add it to the clear

liquid left after dissolving half a pound of chloride of lime in two quarts of water. This must be tightly corked and kept in a dark place. Use it on nothing but white clothes; it removes color from a fabric.

“But to go back to our soiled linen: After it is mended and cleansed of stains I sort it, putting the finest and cleanest by itself, the medium-soiled, then the dirtiest and coarsest in another heap. An hour or two before soaking the clothes, shave half a cake of laundry soap into a boiler half full of water and set it at the back of the stove. Fill two tubs with tepid water, adding enough of the dissolved soap to make a strong suds. Put the clothes in one by one, the dirtier pieces at the bottom, the cleaner on top. That finishes Monday's work, allowing one to begin Tuesday with a clean house and enough food on hand, so work will not have to wait while cooking is done.”

“Won't you tell me, please,” said Margaret, “the best way to wash? I never soaked clothes, and it is so hard to get them clean.”

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“ Half the washing is done by soaking. The alkali in the soap has had time to act upon the dirt. In the morning wring the clothes and fill a tub with water as hot as you can put your hand in, then wash them, soaping and rubbing any stains. Wring and wash through another tubful of hot water, and drop them in a boilerful of cold water with dissolved soap in it. Let the clothes scald, then empty them into a tub of cold water, wring and rinse in the bluing water. It is almost as essential to hang out clothes properly as it is to wash them right. Sheets, tablecloths, towels, pillow-cases, and napkins should be pinned squarely at the corners, and allowed as much length as possible to hang, but not to touch the ground. Group together all articles of one sort on a line. Fasten garments by the bands, — it will make the danger of tearing less. Dry colored clothes in the shade to prevent fading, and do not hang starched articles in a strong wind or you will find no stiffness left in them.

“ You ought to have a receptacle suitable for clothes-pins. The handiest thing is a denim



PLATE VIII.—It is as essential to hang clothes properly as to wash them right.



bag made like an apron, with a deep pocket at each side. It requires a strong binding and stout band to fasten about the waist, as it is heavy when full of pins. Many a time during the winter I have watched you hanging out clothes and wanted to go out and wrap you up. So many colds are contracted on wash-day, simply from want of thought. Certain belongings are indispensable for laundry work. I keep them on hand for Norah and see to it that she wears them. There is a rubber apron — it costs a dollar to begin with, but it lasts for years. Over it may be tied a strong gingham apron. There is a warm golf jacket of white wool — an old one Frances had discarded — a warm hood, clean white mittens, and a pair of rubbers. The idea of having them white is that the wet clothes may not be soiled. Going from the hot steaming laundry to the chill of outdoors is the surest way one can plan to take a hard cold, the sort of cold that is a foundation for pneumonia. You will forgive me for talking about it?"

"Of course, I realize how careless I have

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been. I'm going to heed everything you have told me."

"Good! Norah has just brought the washing in now and is folding the clothes. Let us go and watch her."

As they entered the kitchen the stalwart young maid came in from the yard with a basketful of snowy clothes. She laid them on a chair and covered the table with an ironing cloth, then set a bowl of clean warm water and a small whisk-broom beside her. Each article was shaken thoroughly; then dipping the whisk-broom in the water, she sprinkled it lightly.

"I suggested, you remember," said Mrs. Griswold, "hanging pieces of the same kind together. You see the advantage of it—Norah has all the table napkins in one bunch. She can sprinkle them now and roll them together."

Beginning with a dampened napkin, Norah prepared to fold each piece, drawing the edges and corners straight and smoothing wrinkles. Another napkin was laid on top, smoothed and

pulled in shape till every one was in the pile, when it was rolled up tight and wrapped inside a towel. Table linen was made quite damp, all the starched pieces very damp, while sheets, pillow-cases, towels and underclothing were dampened only slightly.

"It takes two persons to fold sheets and tablecloths," said Mrs. Griswold. "I will help you with it, Norah."

The mistress and maid began with opposite ends of the dampened cloth, pulling a hand-breadth at the time. It was folded exactly in the middle, the sides and corners being matched with care. The basket was lined with an old sheet and into it went the folded clothes, the larger rolls in the bottom, the smaller on top.

"In summer we leave the sprinkling and folding of clothes till early on the morning of ironing day. If left damp for twelve hours during hot weather they might mildew."

"I have learned something," said Margaret. "I think my clothes will look better for it."

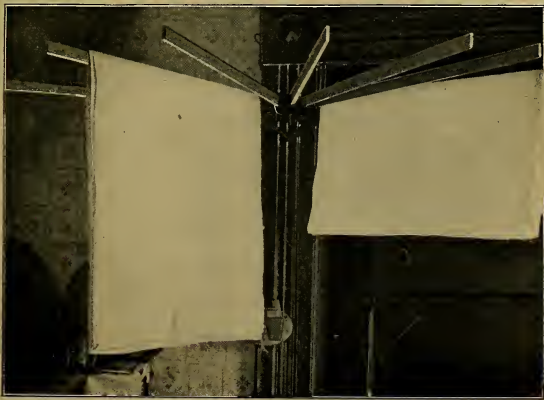
One morning Mrs. Griswold dropped in when the young housewife began to iron.

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“ Perhaps I can give you a few ideas,” said the elder woman.

“ I assure you I need them. I scorch things, or the iron sticks, or — ”

“ I must tell you how to care for your irons. They will grow smoother as they age; the longer irons are in use the better they grow and the more easily they can be kept clean. Once in a while, after they have been used, rub them with sweet oil and let them stand a few days to allow the grease to strike in. Afterward wash them in soapsuds, rinse and dry thoroughly. When they rust paint the spots with quicklime and sweet oil, let stand a week, then wash and dry. I keep a sheet of fine emery paper tacked to a board, and every time the irons get rusty or rough I scrub them thoroughly. After a year of such care they will be smooth as polished steel. Only they must be kept clean by frequent washing and be stored in a clean, dry place. Now to ironing. First, you cannot work on a board with a loose cloth on it. Let me cover it for you. This strip of old blanket and sheet is just what is



*PLATE IX.—A. A clothespin apron bag. B. An emery board.
C. The best clothes horse.*



wanted, but it must be put on without a wrinkle."

Mrs. Griswold spread the woollen cover in place and tacked it under the edges, covering with the white cotton till perfectly smooth. She stretched the board from a chair back to the table. At the right she laid several thicknesses of newspaper, a stand for the irons and an old soft cloth to wipe the irons. On the table was a paper sprinkled with salt, and a cloth holding a bit of wax.

"Let me do a bit of ironing," she said. "I will begin with the coarsest dish-towels. They are not easily scorched, and it tempers the heat of the iron before beginning on the starched articles. Keep the irons in good condition by rubbing them on the salt. The secret of making clothes look nice is to iron them perfectly dry with a light pressure till the surface is smooth, then press harder. Iron first the borders of napkins and handkerchiefs, being careful to pull them even and fold perfectly square. Hang everything to dry on the frame except small articles.

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“The work of ironing cannot be called over when clothes are white and smooth. They must be carefully folded, carefully hung to dry, and carefully put away. The best clothes-horse is a cluster of long arms set against the wall. It is out of the way. When the clothes are dry, pull a clean table close to the clothes-horse and fold each piece in the creases made by the iron. Smooth it flat. Fasten shirts by a button at the neck, then they will fold neatly.

“You are doing capitally.” Mrs. Griswold watched her pupil hang a satin-smooth tablecloth on the frame. “I’m going to give you a bit of advice. We have a laundry in town which, for any customer who sends the weekly consignment of shirts, cuffs and collars, does flat pieces for twenty-five cents a dozen. Flat pieces include sheets, tablecloths, towels, and pillow-cases. They are mangled beautifully, and it lessens labor.”

“I will be glad to send them; it will take out the pieces I find hardest to do. And — if you can stay for a little visit, won’t you finish telling how you plan your week’s work?”

I'm going to do my washing on Tuesday next week."

"We had reached Wednesday, I remember. I make Thursday as easy as possible, both for Norah and myself. It is a sort of breathing-spell between the hardest tasks of the week. If the baked things of Monday have given out, I plan a pudding or jelly for dessert and some easily made sweet dish for supper. After finishing the usual work of the morning, dish-washing, dusting, and bedmaking, I go to my sewing-room to mend and darn stockings. Washing will make a break here and there one does not catch in looking over the soiled clothes. Norah spends her morning cleaning the silver."

"Do tell me what you use for that job," begged Margaret. "Everything I try scratches it."

"I use saleratus moistened with a few drops of ammonia. It is an old-fashioned formula my mother and grandmother used. Nothing gives such a radiant polish; then it is clean to work with. Apply it with a soft cloth and allow it to dry on, then polish with a thin, soft

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chamois. Thursday is Norah's afternoon out, so I generally plan a light supper. Friday is sweeping day. After breakfast, while Norah is busy with the dishes, I go through the chambers making beds, pinning up curtains, and putting toilet-table belongings under a sheet on the bed. By going ahead of the sweeper and following to dust and straighten things, we manage to have the whole house, except the kitchen, spick and span before two o'clock. Saturday is a day of odds and ends. Usually I bake, while Norah mops the porches, washes windows, cleans the refrigerator, sweeps the cellar, tidies the store-closet and pantry, and scrubs the kitchen. If you were to adopt my plans for your small household, I think you would find work made easier."

V

GAS-STOVE AND REFRIGERATOR KNOWLEDGE

"MY dear girl, I would do nothing of the sort," said Mrs. Griswold one afternoon while she sat knitting on her neighbor's piazza. "You have been in this house for only five months; it does not require a strenuous cleaning."

"Rob's aunt called the other day. She was horrified when I told her I was not going to houseclean. She said some cutting things." Margaret's lip quivered.

"That's nonsense," said the elder woman emphatically. "You keep your pretty little home immaculate. I should not worry; it is none of her business."

"I have cleaned the house thoroughly." Margaret looked up eagerly from a shirt she was mending. "I swept from attic to cellar and washed windows and dusted walls. I

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did not clean paint or pull everything outside in."

"There was no necessity for it."

"I wish you would tell me something about how to put away winter clothes. Grandmother and I always sent our things to a bug-proof vault."

"One can store them quite as well at home and with no expense. Moths flee from printers' ink; therefore I know of no better plan than to store woollen garments and furs in newspaper. Take them outdoors and beat them thoroughly. Sun furs for nearly a week and treat to a good combing before they are packed. I take a stiff brush and part the hair here and there till I reach the pelt, then I comb it. It makes the fur look like new; it also brings out moth eggs which may have been laid there. After airing I lay the furs in a double fold of newspaper and paste it till there is not a crack left at which a moth can enter. I have ready-gummed labels with 'Polly's Muff,' 'Father's Seal Mittens,' 'As-trakhan Boa,' or whatever it happens to be



PLATE X.—A. Take furs outdoors and beat them. B. Get pans which fit into your oven.



printed on them. When these bundles are piled on an attic shelf with the label outward, it is easy to find what is wanted. Winter garments, such as heavy suits or overcoats, I carry to the bright sunshine, then search for every stain and take it out. I save the large paper boxes that suits, shirtwaists, laundry, or boys' clothes are delivered in, line them with newspaper, fold the garments neatly, tuck in beside each one a tiny ball of absorbent cotton which has been sprinkled with oil of cedar, and I paste up the box, writing on the outside what it contains."

"Is that safe?"

"Perfectly; I never found a moth hole in anything. It is cheap and simple in comparison to the way some women fuss with cedar chests, tar-paper bags, naphtha, carbolic acid, moth-balls, camphor, tobacco, red pepper, cedar shavings, and sandalwood.

"I dislike moth-ball odor, which clings to your clothes till the frost takes it out. Yet all this fussing is simply like putting silver in a safe," laughed Mrs. Griswold; "you

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and I keep our houses almost moth-proof. Every apartment is sweet, clean, and sunshine flooded. Moths hate sunlight and cleanliness almost as they do camphor and cedar smells."

"The only place in the house I have not cleaned now is the cellar. We haven't taken out the ashes."

"Before carting them away I would suggest cleaning the furnace. A man from the stove store will overhaul it thoroughly for \$1.50. When we started a fire one fall the pipes leaked. A man from the furnace dealer's came to fix it. The pipes had not been cleaned for three years, so they were filled with soot and ashes. That summer had been unusually damp, and the moisture penetrated to the furnace, transforming an accumulation of ashes in the chimney and pipes into mud, which rusted the metal into holes. New pipes and the labor of putting them in cost us \$22.00 instead of the \$1.50 we now spend each spring on getting the furnace thoroughly cleaned. It also saves money on

coal; we get more heat from the furnace than if there were deposits of ashes to prevent radiation."

"Just as if the kitchen stove were clogged with ashes," suggested Margaret.

"Exactly. Now as to cleaning the cellar. When the furnace has been attended to and the ashes carried away, open the windows and give it a good airing. Sweep the walls, ceiling, and floor, and brush the dirt off stationary articles. Wash the windows, then turn the garden hose loose in the cellar. Sozzle the walls, the ceiling, the floor, the coalbins, even around the furnace. In the floor is a drain which leads to the sewer, and the water will soon disappear, carrying with it cobwebs, spiders, and all sorts of creatures which love damp, dark nests. When the water subsides, put on a pair of rubbers and wipe the furnace, then light a wood fire to dry it outside and in. Set screens in the windows, and let air in to freshen and dry the cellar. As soon as hot weather begins I open the cellar windows only at night."

“Why?”

“The outdoor air in the daytime is much warmer than in the cellar. When it enters the cool underground atmosphere it condenses as warm air does outside a pitcher of ice-water. Mould and rust is the result, while the cellar becomes damp and warm.”

“Here comes our new gas-stove,” cried Margaret. “Did I tell you Rob had ordered one?”

Mrs. Griswold followed her to the kitchen, where the men came with the stove.

“There is one difficulty,” said Margaret, — “I don’t know how I will move when I have two stoves, a refrigerator, and a table in this tiny kitchen.”

“Have the men store your coal-stove in our barn,” said the kindly neighbor.

Fifteen minutes later the range had been carried away and there was a place ready for the gas-stove.

“Here is a capital corner for it,” said Mrs. Griswold; “so close to the cellar door and a gas-jet that little piping will be required.

Then it is out of reach of a draught from the door or windows."

The comfort of the gas-stove was realized by the young housewife when a spell of summer weather arrived in the middle of May. Still, it was not all plain sailing; there was dismay when the first month's bill came in.

"Is n't four dollars for gas pretty expensive?" she asked, when Mrs. Griswold ran in one day.

"It is altogether too much. I must give you a few points on how to keep the metre jogging at a slower speed, and also suggest various appliances which save gas. You must have a small oven to set on top. It costs only \$1.50. The lower oven is heated by double rows of burners which fairly consume gas. The tiny fourteen-inch oven is set over one burner on top. It will not hold a turkey or a baron of beef, but it takes care of every-day cooking. You may not get accustomed to it immediately. I did n't. I found things burned on the bottom. I bought a book filled with asbestos paper, which cost

only 10 cents. Now I lay a sheet of asbestos in the bottom of the oven, and everything bakes beautifully. I watch the metre occasionally to discover how much gas is burned. In thirty minutes yesterday I baked a cake, a pan of pop-overs, and a jar of prunes; the cost was not more than 2 cents. The small oven will cook a rib roast if set in a short-handled iron spider. It is handy afterward to prepare the gravy in. I measured the oven, then I bought bake-pans to fit it. You would be surprised to see how much it will hold by tucking pans tightly together. Instead of baking pies in round plates I use square ones. Only one round plate will go on a shelf, while I can put two square pies, besides a long, narrow cake-pan, on one shelf, leaving the upper one for other uses. By setting the oven over the simmering burner you can cook dishes which require a moderate heat, — baked beans, beef *à la mode*, custards, casserole dishes, rice, tapioca, and gingerbread. I cook all dried fruits, such as prunes or apricots, in the oven. When I want to make



*PLATE XI.—A. A gas stove toaster. B. A gas stove waffle iron.
C. The small oven bakes beans to perfection. D. A contrivance
for heating irons on the gas stove.*



brownbread, I pour it in a greased coffee tin, set that inside a lard pail, and pour boiling water around it. Three hours in the oven, with the simmerer turned high enough to bake beans, will steam the bread to perfection.

“Among other savers of gas bills is a contrivance for heating irons, a toaster to put over a burner, and a broiler which will cook over the gas. They only cost about 25 cents each. I became acquainted with a gas-stove twelve years ago. During that time I have learned how to get the best results with the least gas. First you must realize the value of this small burner, — the simmerer, as it is called. After anything is brought to a boil, it cooks with equal speed, whether it ‘grins or smiles,’ as a French cook expresses it. Indeed, everything is better cooked at the smiling than at the grinning stage; then half the amount of gas suffices. When there is a roast for dinner, vegetables and dessert may be baked instead of boiled. Certain cereals may be cooked in five minutes over a flame, — stirring constantly, of course, — which would

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have required an hour in the double boiler. There are many dishes which are quite as good steamed as baked, — scores of puddings, for instance, as well as bread, veal loaf, custards, potatoes, and a number of vegetables.”

“I feel guilty,” confessed Margaret. “I kept the big oven running for half an hour yesterday to bake two cups of custard.”

“Nothing will teach you like experience and a few big gas bills.”

“I wish you would tell me how to keep the stove clean. Things boil over on top and burn in the oven.”

“All the care a gas-stove requires is that it be kept washed clean. Once a day pull out the tray from under the burners and scrub it in soap and water, putting it in a hot oven to dry. Occasionally, before the kitchen floor is mopped, Norah washes off the stove inside and out with a scrubbing-brush and hot suds, lighting the oven burners immediately and drying it off to prevent rust. I had a tin-smith make a zinc slide for the bottom of the oven. When anything gets spilt, the slide can

be drawn out and washed. It is easier than cleaning the crusted bottom of the oven."

"Rob suggests putting the refrigerator down cellar; it crowds our little kitchen, and is terribly in the way."

"Don't," advised Mrs. Griswold. "You cannot preserve food in a damp atmosphere. By pushing aside a table in the kitchen it could be set between two windows, where the sun will not beat on it."

"The ice melts so fast," objected the young housewife.

"You buy a twenty-five-pound piece, don't you?"

Margaret nodded.

"Take my advice and put in a hundred pounds at the time. Ice will not melt so fast in a temperature of 45° as it will when the temperature is 55° . The only way to retain a temperature of 45° is to keep the ice-box full and the doors and lids constantly shut. One hundred pounds in a chunk will last nearly twice as long as if it were delivered in instalments. How do you drain the refrigerator?"

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"Into a pan, and it is such a nuisance; I forget to empty it. The other night Rob and I went to a concert. We never thought of going to the kitchen when we came in, and next morning a stream from the waste-pipe had trickled clear across the dining-room floor."

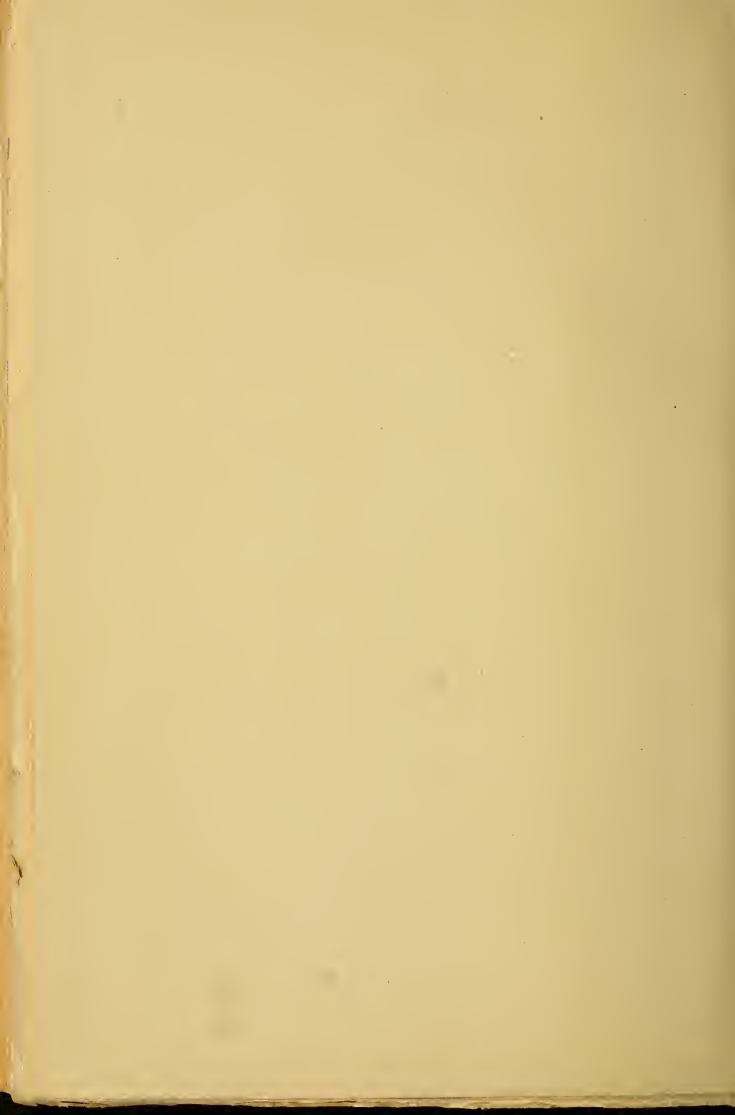
"My husband must show Robert how to drain it. If you set the refrigerator between the windows it will stand exactly over the set-tubs in the cellar, as ours does. Bore a hole in the kitchen floor large enough to hold the tube of a funnel. Set the waste-pipe of the refrigerator over the funnel, and to the tube which protrudes through the floor attach a few feet of rubber tubing. This can drain into a tub. Of course, there is the necessity once a week of cleaning the tub. The hose must not reach the waste-pipe; it might suck sewer odors up into the refrigerator. On wash-day let it drip into a pail while the tub is in use."

"I have trouble with milk and butter tasting of things; the other day the butter had a decidedly fishy flavor."

"The greatest care must be taken about



PLATE XII.—A. The butter had a decidedly fishy flavor. B. Norah cleans our refrigerator once a week.



storing food in a refrigerator. Certain things may be kept beside the ice, provided the chamber is not too full. Lettuce, cucumbers, radishes, celery, or a fish wrapped in paraffin paper, may be laid on the ice. The air is purified when it goes under the rack and will not carry odors to the food below. Nothing like butter, milk, or even drinking-water, unless bottled, should go in the ice chamber, as smells from food in the shelves below may be absorbed."

"Where, then, can I store things that will be spoiled by odors?"

"There is only one place in a refrigerator free from odors,—that is on the top shelf, under the opening through which cold air descends from the ice. Here butter or milk set to raise cream can be kept safely. The coldest place in a refrigerator is the bottom of the provision chamber. Here I keep meat, cooked or uncooked; fish which has been cleaned and dried, then wrapped in parchment paper; bottled milk, oysters, and drinking-water (in a corked bottle)."

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“Does a refrigerator need cleaning often?” said Margaret.

“We clean ours once a week, planning the job so that it will be dry before the ice-man comes. The shelves and the rack are scrubbed in hot soapsuds, then in hot soda water, and rinsed in boiling water. They are wiped dry and set outdoors to air. If anything has been spilled, a fine-pointed skewer will pick it out of a corner or ledge. The funnel is taken out and washed, the pipe and hose cleaned, and hot soda water flushes the pipes. Every corner is wiped dry, while the air freshens it for an hour. Then with a hundred pounds of ice in its place the temperature goes back shortly to the desired 45°.”

VI

A LESSON ON CANNING FRUIT

"I WANT to make a proposition," said Mrs. Kerr one morning. "Rob's uncle has a big market-garden in Pike county. He has sent us two crates of splendid strawberries. If you will come across with your cans and canning necessities, you may have a crate to preserve. I'll put up the other."

"Oh, thank you; that is a gift I will accept with pleasure, for I have n't canned any berries yet."

"These are rarely fine berries," said Mrs. Griswold when she raised the lid of a crate; "finer than any I've seen this season. I had planned to preserve strawberries next week while they are in their prime. Some housewives wait till fruit gets poor and cheap before they begin canning. I do not believe in that. There is economy in paying a good price, not an extravagantly early price, but

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one that will command native fruit, which is the finest, juiciest, best flavored on the market. I study the tastes of my household, and put up as much or as little fruit as I know will be eaten."

"What are the best months for preserving different fruits?" asked Margaret.

"In June come strawberries, rhubarb, and cherries; July brings red and black raspberries, gooseberries, currants, blackberries, and blueberries. In August we have blackberries, peaches, plums, pears, and crab-apples. A September sun ripens quinces, grapes, barberries, and citrons. When I am planning to put up fruit I make my preparations the night before. Fruit cans and lids are sterilized by putting them in cold water softened by borax, and allowing it to boil for twenty minutes. I provide new rings; a rubber which has been used once is fit only to throw away. When the cans have been thoroughly cleansed, fill each one with water, put on the rubber and lid, screw tight, and turn upside down on a sheet of paper. If there is the slightest leak

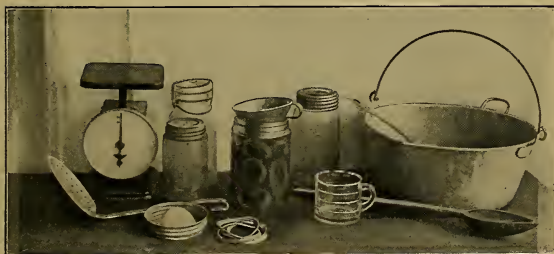


PLATE XIII.—A. A row of water-filled cans upside down. B. The fruits of a summer in jars. C. Utensils required at preserving time.



it will show; therefore, discard that jar; there is a crack or chip in it somewhere by which bacteria will enter to make the fruit ferment later.

“Next morning I rise early and go to market at six o'clock, hiring a parcel-delivery man to carry home the fruit. This costs fifteen or twenty-five cents, but it pays. I get the pick of the finest fruit gathered freshly the night before, and I have it at the house ready to begin work on after breakfast. Norah washes the dishes and leaves the beds to air till afternoon, then we both begin work on the fruit, getting it out of the way before lunch-time. Now we have berries enough hulled to begin work. The regulation canned strawberries are warranted to take away one's appetite. They are shrivelled, bleached, tasteless bits of pulp floating in a sweetened pink liquid. Both color and taste have been cooked out of them. The only way to preserve strawberries perfectly is to put them up without cooking. It is a trifle more expensive than the method by which other fruits are canned,

but you will be repaid by the quality of your preserves."

"Why are you sorting them over?" asked Margaret, while she watched her neighbor separate the berries into two bowls.

"The fine, large ones are for canning; the smaller berries are to convert into juice."

There was one quart of inferior berries. Mrs. Griswold put them, with half a cupful of water, over the fire in a small saucepan. When they had cooked to a pulp she squeezed them through a potato ricer, then added to one pint of juice a pound of sugar and half a pint of water. While it simmered for twenty minutes she filled the cans with the fine berries and set them into the wash-boiler, which held a layer of excelsior and enough warm water to cover half of the cans. Fresh berries were added as the fruit sank into the can. Into the bottles was poured the ruby-colored strawberry syrup. When each can was filled to overflowing the lids were snapped on, and hot water was poured into the boiler till it almost reached the top of the cans. The gas

was lit underneath, the lid of the boiler was put on, then the water boiled slowly for half an hour. The cans were lifted out and covered with a thick towel to prevent cool air striking them; that might have cracked the glass.

“This is all the science there is about canning fruit,” said Mrs. Griswold when the last jar was set upon the table. “Now I am going backward over a number of small points I have not mentioned. In the future buy pint jars; they hold as much as you will require for two meals. After opening a quart can, the fruit must be used within a few days unless it can be kept in a cold place. Notice this wooden rack upon which I set the hot cans. It is a frame upon which silkoline was wrapped. Any drygoods store will give you one. It is the handiest thing I know for setting hot kettles or cans on a table. Use the best granulated sugar for canning. If it makes a clear syrup it is all right; if there is a trace of a bluish scum, order your grocer to change it. It will pay you to buy sugar in larger quantities than a dollar’s worth. My

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plan is to wait each year till sugar drops in price, — it inevitably does after the fruit-canning season, — then I purchase a barrel, which nets me ten pounds extra on each one hundred pounds. Forty pounds of sugar — for a barrel usually holds four hundred pounds — is economy worth while, to say nothing of the convenience in having plenty on hand at preserving time.”

“ I wish you would tell me something about the utensils to use. I am no borrower,” said Margaret.

“ Buy a preserving-kettle of enamelled iron. It was not a necessity to-day, when we had only syrup to boil, but you will require it later in the season for cooking such fruits as pears and quinces, and for boiling jellies. You need a wooden spoon, a granite ladle that holds a cupful to dip fruit into the can, a fruit funnel which fits into the mouth of a can, a pair of scales, a skimmer, a measuring-cup, and a potato ricer, which you will find available for many things besides squeezing the juice from fruit.

"About fruit I have a 'wrinkle' of my own. Something in light rays causes fermentation and granulation. The dampness which exists in even the driest cellars is not conducive to keeping fruit, and it is hard to exclude light from an upstairs closet. At a paper factory I had several hundred bags made from dark-blue paper. They are shaped to envelop a fruit can completely. On each is pasted a label with the name of the fruit written on it. Since I adopted this plan I have not lost a pint of fruit."

"Now I shall go ahead," said Margaret, "and put up all the season's fruit."

"I am sure you can," answered Mrs. Griswold, decisively, "only different fruits require different methods. If you can afford fruit to squeeze the juice from and add to the syrup, as we did with the strawberries, you will have a preserve that is fine and fruity; still, it is not a necessity. The strawberry, when put up in plain syrup, loses in flavor and color. Preserved in its juice, it is a plump, delicious berry. Blackberries, red and

black raspberries, blueberries, cherries, pine-apples, fine ripe peaches, plums, apricots, and damsons, may be canned as we have done the strawberries. Quinces and pears are a hard fruit; they require steaming or cooking to become tender. In fruits you have to peel, such as pears and peaches, always use a silver knife, to prevent the fruit becoming discolored."

"When you pour boiling fruit and syrup into a can, is n't there danger of breaking it? I had a glass measuring-cup snap in two yesterday when I put hot water in it."

"If you had put a teaspoon in the cup it would not have broken," answered Mrs. Griswold. "When you are canning fruit, lift a jar from the boiling water in which it was sterilized and wind around it a towel wrung from hot water. Sterilize a rubber ring and lay on the mouth of the jar. Insert the funnel and drop in the jar a long-handled silver fork. Put the wooden frame on the table and set the hot kettle upon it. Lift the fruit from the syrup and fill the jar, then pour

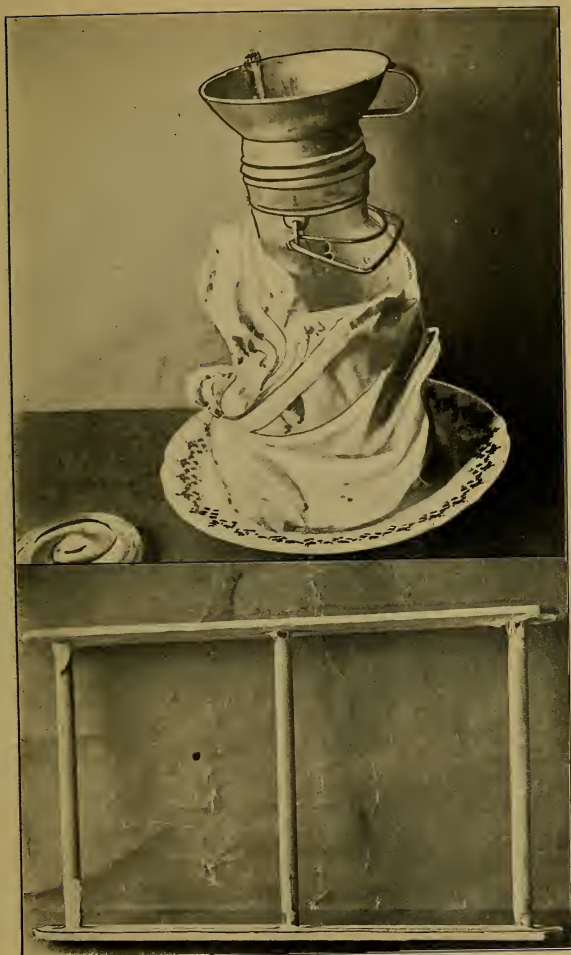
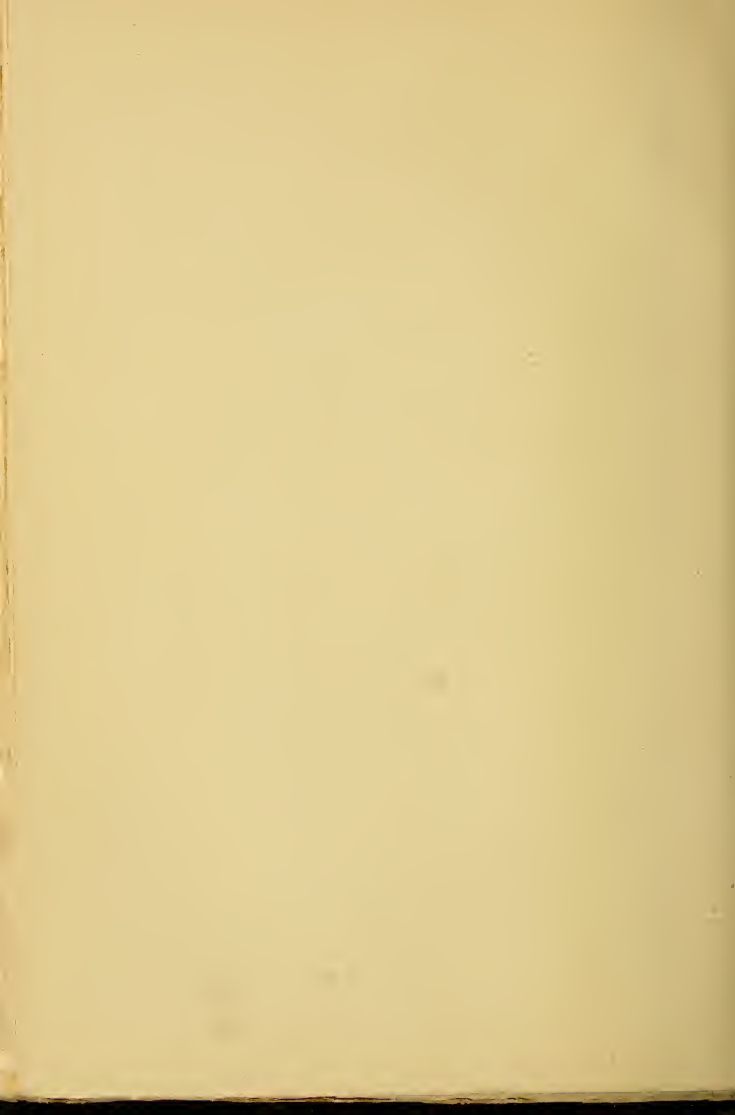


PLATE XIV.—A. A bottle ready to fill with hot fruit. B. A rack for the hot kettle.



in a ladleful of boiling syrup till the jar overflows. With the handle of the fork press the fruit away from the side of the jar, that air-bubbles may escape. Put on the cover and snap it down tight."

"Do all fruits require the same amount of sugar?" asked Mrs. Kerr.

"No, indeed. Consider the sweetness of the fruit you are preserving. Strawberries are sour in comparison to red raspberries or blueberries. Suppose I make for you a table such as we use."

Then she wrote down this table, indicating the proportions of sugar and water required in the syrups of the different fruits:

Pineapple	1 lb.	sugar, 1 pt.	water
Peaches	1½ lb.	"	"
Quinces	1½ lb.	"	"
Pears	1½ lb.	"	"
Blueberries . . .	1½ lb.	"	"
Sour Plums . . .	¾ lb.	"	"
Sweet Plums . . .	1½ lb.	"	"
Cherries	1½ lb.	"	"
Red Raspberries .	1½ lb.	"	"
Blackberries . . .	1½ lb.	"	"
Strawberries . . .	1 lb.	"	"

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"These quantities give you well-sweetened fruit with a rich syrup. By cutting down slightly the amount of sugar you have an equally good preserve, with more of the flavor of the fruit."

"You set away six baskets of berries," said Margaret. "What are we to do with them?"

"I planned to give you an idea of how jellies are made, then we will put up a tumbler of sun-cooked strawberries, a method used in England. It is such a rich preserve that you can use it for a garnish, just as you drop a Maraschino cherry into whipped cream or a jelly."

"Can jelly be made from strawberries?"

"Not from strawberries alone. They are lacking in pectin, a carbohydrate which resembles gelatine. It dissolves in boiling water, but stiffens in cooling. The fruits which contain the largest amount of pectin are quinces, apples, crab-apples, currants, and grapes. The juice of strawberries would not jelly by itself, but if I add to it some fruit which is rich in pectin I get a delicious and firm jelly."

"Only," suggested Margaret, "I have neither quinces, apples, currants, nor grapes on hand."

"Perhaps not," said Mrs. Griswold, "but I happen to have two baskets of half-ripened currants we got for pie-making. You may have them."

She returned a few minutes later with the fruit.

"I brought a jelly-bag along," she said. "You have not been housekeeping long enough to own a jelly-bag. Now we will hull these berries, reserving the large, perfect ones for preserves, while the smaller ones will go into a jelly."

Two quarts of strawberries went into a granite kettle with the currants. They were mashed with a silver spoon till the juice flowed, then set over a gas flame to cook slowly. Mrs. Griswold put the pointed crash bag in a large bowl.

"Now, if you will hold the mouth of the bag open, I will pour in the fruit."

"Why did you wring the bag from hot water?" asked Margaret.

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"To moisten it. If I poured the fruit in while it was dry, the linen would have absorbed half a cup of fruit juice. Now we will hang the bag to this hook over the sink and set a bowl beneath it to catch the juice. The sun comes pouring in here. We want its heat on the bag."

"Why?"

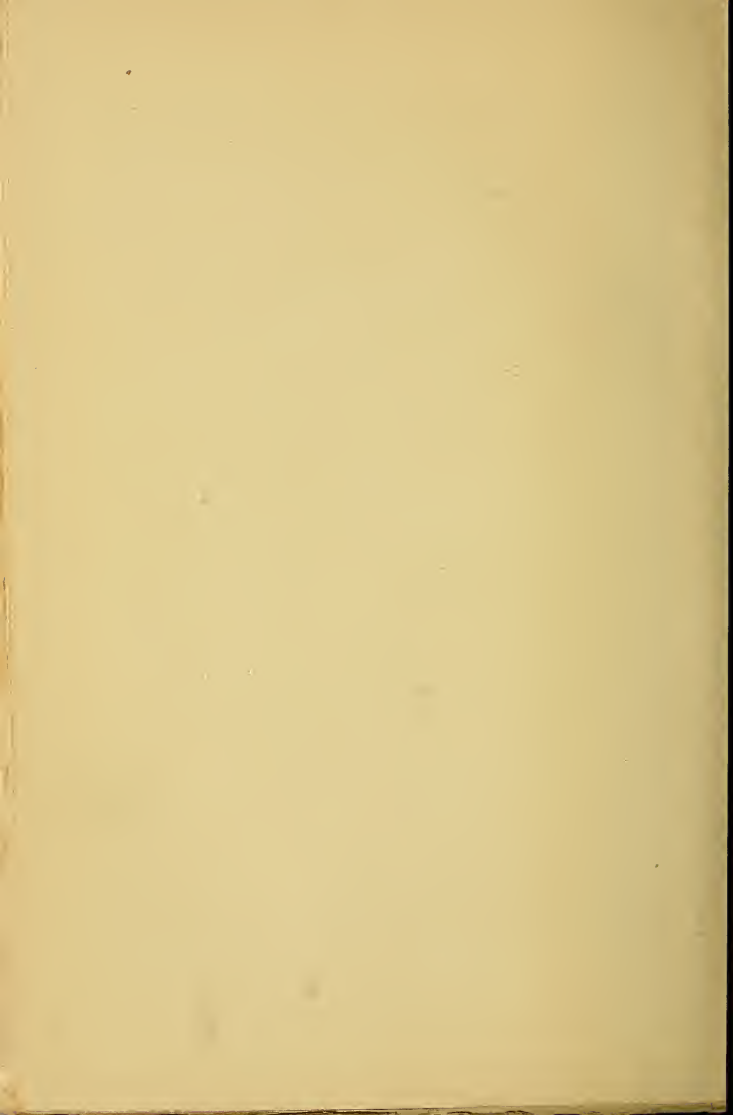
"You know how gelatine hardens when it cools. Pectin has the same property. Late in the autumn, when I make grape, apple, or quince jelly, I hang the jelly-bag close to the stove so the warmth will keep the juices oozing."

"When will it cease to drip?"

"Let it hang over night. In the morning measure the juice, and to a pint of juice use a pint of sugar. Set the sugar in a pan in the oven. Boil the juice for half an hour, then add the heated sugar. Ten minutes' boiling will make it into jelly. Pour into hot tumblers and set aside to cool. Next morning pour melted paraffin into each tumbler, cover with the tin lids and set away."



PLATE XV.—A. This is all the science there is about canning fruit. B. Let a jelly bag drip over night.



“Can other fruits be used with currants for jelly?” asked Margaret.

“Yes, indeed; currant jelly by itself is very good, but you may have a variety of flavors by using equal quantities of red raspberries, cherries, pineapples, or blackberries; each one of these fruits lacks in pectin, so they require currants or some other fruit to make them jelly. And, by the way, remember that all fruit used in jelly is much better under-ripe than over-ripe. It is also hard to jelly fruit which has been picked soon after rain.”

“I am curious to know about the sun-cooked berries,” said Margaret.

“We have here four pounds of perfect berries,” said Mrs. Griswold, as she lifted them off the scales. “I will put them in the preserving-kettle and add four pounds of sugar. Now place on the fire and heat slowly to the boiling point. Let it simmer for ten minutes, skimming thoroughly. Pour the preserve on platters and set in a sunny window for twenty-four hours. Then pour into jelly-glasses and cover.”

VII

HOT WEATHER HEALTH AND COMFORT

MRS. GRISWOLD was putting breakfast on the table when she heard a rap at the back door. Robert Kerr stood there.

"I hate to bother so good a neighbor," he said, apologetically, "but my little wife is not feeling well. She is overcome by the heat, I think."

"I'll come right away." Mrs. Griswold donned a sunbonnet and crossed the yard, where a July sun blazed down fiercely.

"I don't believe it can be anything very serious," she said; "she is simply prostrated by the heat, and," she added, reluctantly, "by not knowing how to care for herself in hot weather. First, try to get the house cooled off."

"How?"

"You have probably had the windows open day and night since this hot spell began."

"Yes. One wants all the air there is stirring."

"Not hot air! At sundown every window in our house is opened wide; the air is beginning then to cool off. During the night the temperature falls lower still. In the morning we shut windows and doors and close the shutters on the side of the house where the sun pours in. By keeping the cool night air bottled up the difference between outdoors and indoors may be measured by ten or fifteen degrees. Every morning about six o'clock my husband sozzles the house, the piazzas, and the yard. A rush of cold water against windows and walls cools the inside of a house. You might try that now; I will close windows and shutters."

When Mrs. Griswold stole upstairs through the darkened house she found Margaret awake.

"I have had a bad night," the latter confessed. "The heat was so awful I did not sleep till daylight."

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"I am going to make you comfortable in half an hour, if you will follow the orders of an amateur physician."

"I'll do anything you suggest."

"I want you to take a bath," she said. "The tub is half full of tepid water. When you have been in a minute, turn on the cold water and fill the tub."

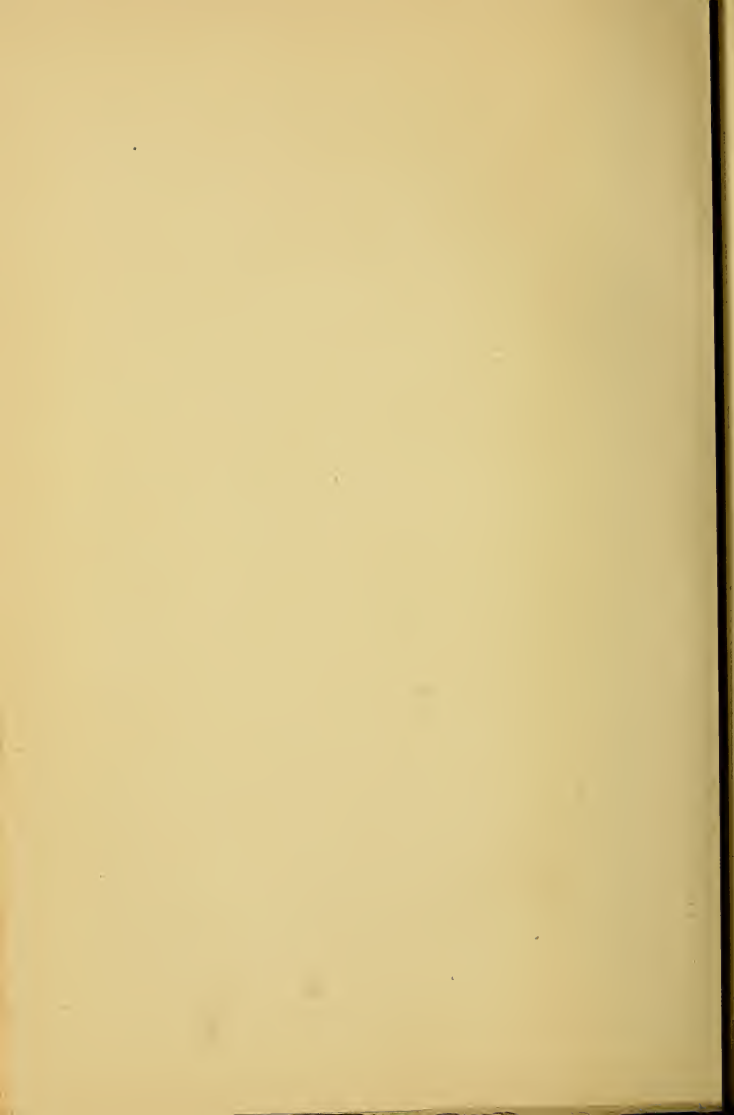
"I cannot take a cold bath." Margaret shivered.

"Try it," pleaded her neighbor. "There will be no chill, the water will be cooled so gradually. Lave your head with cold water, sopping the sponge over the base of your brain. Hold your wrists under a stream of cold water from the faucets. That will cool the hot blood which is pulsing through your body. Stay in the bath till you begin to feel cool; gently pat the body dry, dust your skin with violet powder, put on clean clothes, but no corset nor any girdling of the waist, then don a loose kimono."

Half an hour later, when Mrs. Kerr entered the sitting-room, she looked cool and well.



PLATE XVI.—A. The rush of cold water cooled walls and windows. B. Never leave the garbage can uncovered.



“ I did not believe a bath could work such wonders,” she said. “ I ’ve actually forgotten it is a hot morning.”

“ A cool bath for overheated blood,” said Mrs. Griswold, “ is as necessary as the ice-bath to a typhoid-fever patient. Twice a day in hot weather is none too often to bathe, although some physicians forbid it. The folks of our household, big and little, follow the habit in very hot weather of jumping into a cold tub every night. Then, without using a towel, they go straight to bed cool and damp. It is a habit we learned from a friend who lived in India. There are a few other rules for sleeping well in hot weather,” she continued. “ Every one ought to have the luxury of a separate bed and an abundance of clean linen. During a torrid spell my family has an entire change of underwear three times a week. If we were richer I would make it an every-day change, — from undershirt to hosiery.”

“ It makes the washing heavy,” suggested Mrs. Kerr.

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"It does. I economize, however, on something else and send out extra washing. Now, I'm going to invite you into your own dining-room for a breakfast I prepared while you people were busy elsewhere."

"Isn't this tempting!" cried Margaret.

"It certainly is," said her husband. "I've suddenly acquired an appetite."

The table was freshly lined and daintily set. A bowl full of ferns looked like a memory of the green woods. On a large platter a musk-melon was daintily served. Beside them stood a plate of boiled eggs, a pitcher of iced coffee, crisp popovers, a jug of cream, and a dish of crisp, dry cereal.

"I left my family sitting down to the table," said Mrs. Griswold, "therefore may I invite myself to breakfast?"

"That will be a pleasure," said Robert Kerr, "added to the treat of such a breakfast."

"I don't know how to plan hot-weather menus," said Margaret, while she helped the raspberries. "We've been eating oatmeal

with beefsteak or ham and eggs for breakfast."

"I would forego such dishes if I were you — especially for breakfast — until cool autumn days begin. Allow Nature to plan your meals for you. From spring to autumn we have an abundance of fruit and vegetables, rich in the salts that arouse sluggish blood. Asparagus and rhubarb are real 'spring medicine'; then come other healthful vegetables and fruit. The fish, which are plentiful now, as well as spring lamb and spring chickens, are what we require for hot-weather food. For this reason, and partly for economy's sake, I seldom buy things which are out of season."

"There is common-sense in that," observed Robert.

"Then, about breakfast cereals. Oatmeal is a splendid breakfast food — in winter. The Scotch grow brawny on it, — only remember the thermometer never reaches ninety degrees in Scotland — besides, the people of that country digest their oatmeal by hard exercise. Therefore, select from among the multitude

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of American cereals something which is easily digested, — one of our delicious wheat preparations, or some flaky thing that requires no cooking. If one knows how to choose easily digested foods, the secret of keeping cool in hot weather is half mastered."

"How did you boil these eggs?" asked Margaret. "They slip from the shells like jelly."

"These were not boiled," said Mrs. Griswold. "When the water bubbled I put the gas out and dropped in the eggs. They stood in hot water for ten minutes. Eggs are cooked after this method in the hospitals. They digest in two hours."

"Is n't that quickly?" asked Robert.

"Yes, indeed. Recently at a cooking school lecture I saw a demonstration of how eggs are digested when cooked in different ways. They were dropped into tumblers filled with artificial gastric juice. In an hour and a half a raw egg had been digested, a coddled egg, as this method of cooking is called, took two hours, an egg kept hopping in boiling water



PLATE XVII.—A. Musk melon daintily served. B. A pitcher of iced coffee.



for three minutes was digested in four hours, while a hard-boiled egg had scarcely been affected by the gastric juice in three days."

"I'll leave hard-boiled eggs alone in the future," said Robert. "Tell us more about healthful summer living."

"Suppose I first suggest foods which had better be left alone. In spite of the temptation offered by cherries, rhubarb, and berries, for pie-making, I cut pastry relentlessly from our summer menu. Nothing is so deathly indigestible as the soggy bottom crust of a juicy pie. Besides serving our summer fruits in all their delicious ripeness, one may utilize them in steamed puddings, in jellies, with custards, as ices and soufflés, or in shortcakes, which are much more digestible than pie."

"What about the first course of a meal?" queried Margaret.

"An expert on dietetics omits from the summer menu all red meats. This is too stringent; a leg of spring lamb roasted, a fine juicy steak, bacon and calves' liver, or delicately broiled lamb chops, may be health-

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ful as well as appetizing during the cool spells of summer. When the weather grows intolerably hot, choose instead white-fleshed fish, chicken, sweetbreads, lobster, eggs, or such toothsome bits as corned-tongue or cold boiled ham. With the summer vegetables, which can be served either cooked or in salads, a wholesome as well as attractive table may be set."

"It's a great idea, this iced coffee for breakfast," said Robert, as he poured out another glass. "Yesterday morning I drank a cup of hot coffee. It brought out a perspiration which lasted all the forenoon."

"The right sort of breakfast," said Mrs. Griswold, emphatically, "insures the well-being and comfort of a whole day. A cooling breakfast in midsummer is as necessary as a warming breakfast in midwinter."

"I have n't a doubt of it," said Robert, heartily. "If there are any other suggestions you can give about keeping cool, healthy and happy through the strenuous months, strike right out from the shoulder. We are ignorant

young folks, who stand sorely in need of just the sort of advice you can offer."

"Well" — Mrs. Griswold hesitated for a second — "there is something I have been wishing to speak about. It would be a great boon to your little wife if you could afford to screen the house properly. Mrs. Kerr spoke the other day about getting Arabian lace curtains for the parlor. The price of them would buy screens. Every day I see her driving flies. It is hard work in hot weather, still, every neat housewife will do it rather than endure a fly pest. Once I tried screens of the twenty-five-cent order, such as you have now. They do not fit; flies creep in at every crack and crevice. Beside the annoyance they are, one must take into consideration their pollution of food. Scientists have demonstrated that some of the diseases we most fear are brought into our homes upon the feet of flies."

"I'll have the house screened immediately at any cost," said the young husband, decisively.

"After it is screened," said Mrs. Griswold,

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“you may find it a task to get rid of the flies. They will always seek the sunshine, so darken any room that is infested, leaving an outer room light. They will flock to a window or door where they may easily be driven out or killed. When they have been cleared out, take the greatest care to keep them away, not only from the house but from the doors and windows. Get a strong garbage pail with a tight-fitting lid and never leave it uncovered. After the visit of the garbage man, wash the pail with boiling water in which soda has been dissolved. Set it in the sun to dry before using it again. Never leave a bit of food uncovered in the pantry. When dishes cannot be washed immediately, put them in a pan of water till they can be attended to.”

“Occasionally,” said Margaret, “the house grows damp after a muggy spell of weather. How can we dry it?”

“We have the same trouble. Get a bag of charcoal and divide it into ten or twelve small bags. I make ours of mosquito netting. Drive nails into the rafters of the cellar ceil-

ing and hang up these bags. Charcoal absorbs bad or mouldy smells. Make half a dozen cheesecloth bags and fill with slacked lime. Hang them about the walls where there are signs of dampness. The lime is such thirsty stuff it will absorb any dampness. Occasionally — when a cold day occurs during the summer — light a wood fire in the furnace. Its heat dries the furnace and cellar, also damp walls and floors throughout the house.”

“There is one more thing,” said Robert. “Won’t you give my wife a bit of advice? She is working too hard.”

“I have thought of that,” said Mrs. Griswold, kindly. “I did so myself when I went to housekeeping, till I discovered how foolish it was. Now — especially in hot weather — I give the utmost care to my health. The money paid occasionally for a bit of sewing or a surplus of laundry work is less than doctors’ fees would amount to if I broke down.

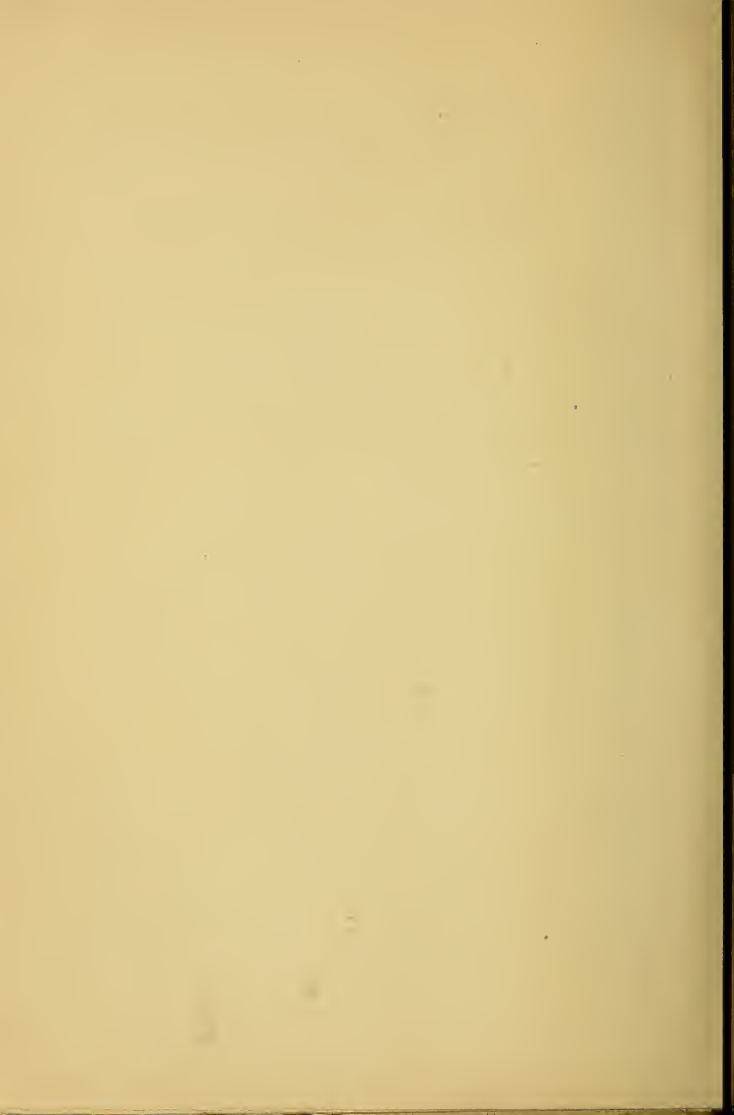
“Years ago, when the children were little and worrisome, I made a plan to which I have adhered closely. One Thursday, when my

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maid, care-free and happy, walked out to join her friends, the thought came to me: Does not the mistress of a household require a half-holiday as much as the maid does? She has certainly earned it. Next day I took a half-holiday. How funny that first afternoon off seemed! I took a car to a distant park alone. It was June and such a gracious day! I found a lonely, delightful spot under the trees. I lay down watching the squirrels, sometimes reading a snatch from a favorite book of poems or listening to the rare sounds of the woods and the birds. When twilight fell I turned to the park restaurant. I ate supper alone—except for my book—at a table under the trees. The supper I had ordered instead of planned was such a treat! Afterward I took a long trolley ride. I reached home after the children were asleep to find my husband pacing anxiously up and down the piazza. He thought that outing was a tremendous joke. Every Friday I take my half-holiday off, no matter how much work is left undone, no matter if I have company.”



PLATE XVIII.—A. The treat of such a breakfast. B. Transform your piazza into an outdoor sitting-room.



"Where do you go?" asked Margaret.

"To all sorts of places. You have been with me more than once. Occasionally to a *matinée*, or to tea in some pleasant, restful household; on a little trip into the country, with supper at a quiet inn. I never go calling or shopping, and when I seek a companion it is one who will soothe my nerves, not tire them."

"Thank you," said Margaret, laughing.

"I would advise you to do the same thing," said Mrs. Griswold, earnestly. "I have thought of suggesting it when I have seen you spending long afternoons at the sewing-machine or in the kitchen. Let toil lie undone once a week; it will come out all the same in the day's work. Live outdoors all you possibly can. Transform your piazza into an outdoor sitting-room. When the sun goes down you might occasionally have tea in the yard, hidden from the street by that young peach-tree. Spread a small table with one of the *crêpe*-paper cloths which are so cheap and pretty. Use paper napkins and wooden plates. The menu will require little work; have sand-

wiches, fruit, and cake or cookies with lemonade or grape-juice."

"I've envied you some of your delightful outdoor suppers," said Robert.

"They were very simple, but children enjoy eating anywhere outside a dining-room. We are all grown-up children, and when the longing occurs for a freer, gipsy-like way of living we ought to carry it out. Our lives are cut short by conventionalism and the luxury of indoors."

VIII

CO-OPERATIVE HOUSEKEEPING AT THE SEASHORE

"WHERE and how to spend a month's vacation" had been the topic of discussion in the Griswold and Kerr homes.

"We are tired of hotels and boarding houses" said Mrs. Griswold, "of dress-up resorts with their ballrooms, bowling-alleys, and thronged bathing beaches. There is an ideal place I have never found, where one can cottage in comfort, where there is no band-playing, no picnicking mobs, no trolleys, not too many neighbors, where one can live simply, cleanly, and quietly."

"I've discovered such a place," said Robert Kerr. "A friend of mine had rented a cottage at Juniper Point —"

"Where is Juniper Point?" asked his wife, eagerly.

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"Clear away from anywhere."

"And what about your friend?" queried Mrs. Griswold.

"His wife has been ailing, the doctor orders her to the mountains, now he wants to get the cottage off his hands."

"How far away is it? Remember, there are six Griswolds to transport, bag and baggage. A trip to Maine or the New Jersey coast is out of the question."

"Juniper Point is in Connecticut. The round trip from here is only two fifty."

"That is certainly within our means, is n't it, mother?" laughed Mr. Griswold.

The upshot of this discussion was that Red Top, the Juniper Point Cottage, was engaged for August at a rental of forty dollars. This included furnishings, except linen and silver, also a rowboat, clam-hooks, fish-poles, and crab-nets. Two days before the immigration to the shore Mrs. Kerr, accompanied by Norah, left to get the cottage in readiness. She sent by special delivery on her arrival at the cottage an inventory of the

furnishings to assist in a final selection of necessities.

The odds and ends which the list suggested were packed in the final box, for a load of necessities had gone by freight a week ahead of them. In that first consignment went towels, a blanket for each bed, two down quilts, dish-towels, roller-towels, and dish-cloths, bed linen, various granite pots and pans, a chafing-dish, an oil-stove with its oven, hammocks, straw mats, piazza pillows, darning and mending necessities, books and playing-cards, — all provisions against rainy-day ennui or chill evenings.

Juniper Point was far from marketing facilities, so a box of groceries had been sent from a grocery store that gave a liberal discount on large orders. The box contained several strips of bacon, jars of dried beef, boxes of salt codfish, spices, soap, borax and ammonia to soften hard water, prunes and dried apricots, beans, baking-powder, dry yeast, rice, barley, cornstarch, crackers, boned chicken, salmon, cereals, spaghetti, macaroni,

tea, coffee, tapioca, chocolate, condensed milk, extract of beef, pickles, olives, flavoring extracts, canned vegetables and fruit, lard, gelatine, honey, fly-paper, lemons, maple syrup, molasses, matches, salad oil, vinegar, popcorn, raisins, root beer extract, sugar, soda, sand-soap, and a barrel of flour. Mrs. Griswold planned her list of food necessities by studying in her expenditure book the food stuffs consumed in a month, adding to it proportionately for two more persons. She also studied her menu-suggester, jotting down ingredients required in favorite dishes. Two trunks held all the clothing.

“Dress is the smallest part of a summer’s enjoyment,” said the mother one day to Margaret, while they sewed on the piazza. “When we first went to the shore I took the children’s shabby clothes along, that they might be worn out. Suddenly everything went to pieces; there I was with a brood of ragged youngsters on my hands, five miles from a drygoods store, and with no sewing-machine. A trip to the nearest city and twenty dollars spent

on ready-made clothing taught me a lesson. Every summer I give away half-worn school clothes to poor city children, and have a dress-maker for two weeks in June to make substantial seashore garb. I buy two pieces of fine denim, half of it dark blue, half a pretty cadet blue. From this I make two suits for each of the children and one for myself. For blouse-waists and shirt-waists I use gray and blue chambray, which washes well till it goes into the rag-bag. The girls and I have each a dress of blue and white seersucker, which requires no ironing. There are no frills or furbelows on anything. Half a dozen pair of strong black stockings with white feet are provided for each one, and carefully fitted stout shoes."

Such a ride it was that August morning, when the old stage horse turned its head toward Juniper Point, through a wild stretch of country where sweet fern tangled with blackberry vines and great trees threw their shadows across the grass-grown road. Then over a hilltop they passed to catch a first view

of the ocean and a hamlet of cottages scattered along the rocky shore.

Red Top was a comfortable cottage with a big living-room, a dining-room with a wide brick fireplace and roomy cupboard. The kitchen held a good sink, with soft water from a double-barrelled arrangement on a platform. In the second and third stories were six bedrooms. The house was clean and fresh, with wooden walls, bare floors, and simple furniture. The dining-table was long enough to seat a party of ten; it had a permanent cover of snowy enamel cloth. After each meal it was wiped clean, so one item — tablecloths — was stricken from the laundry list.

While the men and youngsters of the household were turned loose for a jolly outdoor life, the mistresses of the cottage spent a day in getting everything into shipshape order. The food supplies had been unpacked by Mrs. Kerr and Norah, who arranged them in the dining-room cupboard. Canned goods were stored on the lower shelves; paper bags with

the contents written on each filled two higher shelves. The lemons were in a covered pail on the cupboard floor; beside it stood tin boxes of saltines, crackers, and ginger cookies. Tea and coffee were in tight-fitting canisters, salad oil in a half-gallon flask, molasses and vinegar in a demijohn, and sugar in a pail which held fifty pounds.

That afternoon, when the cottage had been set in perfect order, the housewives adjourned to the wide, breezy piazza to plan a month's housekeeping. It was arranged that each should direct the simple affairs of the household a week in turn. A table of rules was drawn up, printed on a large card, and hung in the dining-room. It ran as follows:

REMEMBER THAT —

Each one shall keep her own room in order, except for the semi-weekly sweep.

The place for clam-forks, fish-poles, crab-nets, oars, and rubber boots is the shed.

Every member of the Red Top family shall care for her own bathing suit, with shoes and stockings, whether wet or dry.

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The piazza and sitting-room must be cleared each night of personal belongings.

From the list of dishes hung in the dining-room, each one may choose three a week.

Collections of shells, stones, and seaweed must not be left where they will be voted a nuisance. Flowers must be changed daily and vases washed.

At the call of the horn the household must assemble for meals. Breakfast delinquents shall cook their own food and wash their dishes.

The list of dishes was Margaret's idea. It suggested preparations which the storeroom and the twice-a-week marketing would allow. Opposite a favorite dish on the list a cross was set by each one when that one's turn came to indicate something he particularly liked. Here is a duplicate of the list:

Black Bean Soup	Chicken Chowder
Beef Soup	Corn “
Tomato Bisque	Steamed Clams
Clam Soup	Roasted “
Pea “	Creamed Oysters
Oyster “	Scolloped “
Potato “	Oysters on Toast
Scotch Broth	Fish Cakes
Clam Chowder	Creamed codfish



PLATE XIX.—A. Clams for one. B. Fish and eels were to be had for patience and bait.



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Hash	Macaroni
Beef Stew	Beans and Brown Bread
Corned Beef and Cabbage	Baked Hominy
Lima Beans	Savory Rice
Ham and Eggs	Buttered Kidney Beans
Creamed Frankforts	Sweet Potatoes
Scrambled Eggs	Succotash
Creamed Chicken	Rice Pudding
Hominy with Milk	Tapioca Pudding
Mush and Milk	Prune Whip
Clam Fritters	Chocolate Blanc Mange
Milk Toast	French Pancakes
Stuffed Eggs	Ginger Pudding
Poached Eggs on Toast	Prune Jelly
Stuffed Tomatoes	Indian Pudding
Scolloped Salmon	Junket
Omelet	Pan Dowdy
Green Corn	Baked Bananas
Corn Oysters	Baked Custard
Shepherd's Pie	Berry Muffins
Sausages	Spanish Cream
Lamb Stew	Bread Pudding
Frizzled Beef	Lemon Jelly
Hamburg Steak	Graham Pudding
Chicken Pie	Chocolate Soufflé
Scotch Collops	Baked Apples
Potato Salad	Apple Fritters
Tomato “	Apple Dumplings
Lobster “	Coffee Jelly

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Mrs. Griswold directed the housekeeping for the first week. The family went early to bed and rose early. Breakfast was over at eight o'clock and the house vacated, for old and young practically lived outdoors. The house was swept on Friday and Tuesday. Every morning the floors of the living-room, kitchen, and dining-room were washed. Norah learned from the maid in an adjacent cottage a country way of scrubbing, which she put into effect. The apartment was cleared of furniture, then over the floor was thrown a pail of water. Into the mop a bundle of pine branches was fixed, and used instead of a scrubbing-brush. The broken green needles made a spicy odor which filled the house even when another pailful of water had been thrown on the floor and swept outdoors. There was little need for a drying mop; in half an hour the wind had swept the floor dry as a bone. Once a week every floor in the house was thoroughly cleaned with soapy water. Washing was made as easy as possible, and nothing was ironed except gowns, handkerchiefs, and

aprons. The clean clothes were thoroughly shaken, neatly folded, spread between papers on the kitchen table, and on top of them went a large bread-board, weighted with stovelids and irons. Next morning they were smooth, snowy white, and fragrant with the salt odors which blew constantly across the Point.

The cooking was as simple as washing and ironing, although appetites were fiercely hungry. The men and children brought in liberal supplies of sea food. The cost of clams was the digging; there were crabs for the catching, oysters were in plenty when the tide went down, fish and eels were to be had for patience, and blueberries and blackberries were more than plentiful. Marketing was done twice a week in the morning by boat. A creek two miles up the shore led at high tide into Bilford. The boat was tied up beside a mossy pier, and half an hour later the marketers left with purchases of meat, butter, ice, lobsters, and fruit. Every morning Raymond and Frances Griswold rowed to a farmhouse across the bay for milk, eggs, and

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vegetables. The food was good and wholesome. Every second day a batch of wheat and graham bread and a big loaf of gingerbread were baked. There was no making of pies and cake; they involved too much labor. Coffee appeared only at the breakfast table, milk, lemonade, or water being the favored beverages. Every fine evening supper was eaten outdoors, sometimes on the rocks in front of the house; then the menu was roasted oysters, for there was a sheltered hollow where a fire could be built. When it was reduced to a bed of hot coals the oysters were heaped in a colander, attached to a long pole, and shaken gently over the red embers. As they popped open, the colander was handed around, and oysters disappeared to an accompaniment of bread and butter sandwiches, and coffee poured by Norah from a steaming pot. Sometimes the party rowed inland up a beautiful river. Then there were such picnics in the woods, with an abundance of sandwiches, plenty of milk to wash them down, and spicy gingerbread.



P^{LATE XX.}—*A.* The children sat on the piazza husking corn.
B. There were such picnics in the woods.



For certain things which seemed to disappear as if by magic, Mrs. Griswold found it wise to prepare ingredients in large quantity. One of these standbys was flour ready for hot biscuit, which popped in the oven by the panful or, baked Scotch scone fashion on a griddle, made an acceptable bread between bakings. With eight pounds of flour she sifted four tablespoonfuls of salt and twelve tablespoonfuls of baking-powder. A pound of butter was rubbed into this till the flour looked like meal. It was kept in a jar at the back of the refrigerator. When needed in a hurry, six cups of the flour were wet with two and a quarter cups of milk and quickly moulded into biscuit. The same mixture, with an extra tablespoon of butter, frequently did duty for short-cake, appearing at the table heaped with blackberries or peaches and cream. Baking-powder, sugar, and salt were sifted in the proper proportions, with cornmeal and flour, ready to be transformed, with various additions, into a toothsome Johnny-cake. A boiled dressing, the usual recipe multiplied by

eight, was kept in a glass can beside the ice, ready for a salad, when a few tablespoons of whipped cream had been beaten into the golden jelly.

“Nobody would imagine this household was made up of two families,” said Margaret, one morning, while the children sat on the piazza husking corn. “The housekeeping wheels go round as if they had been oiled.”

“That is because we divide it evenly,” said Mrs. Griswold.

The work of the cottage did not fall upon Norah and the *pro tem.* mistress alone. The men and the children did their share. Mr. Griswold and Mr. Kerr never delivered fish, oysters, or clams till clean and ready to cook. They kept the dooryard raked up and cared for the garbage can, which had to be emptied in the sea at high tide. They carried water from the pump, which supplied half a dozen cottages. Frances and the eight-year-old Polly dusted the living-rooms, cared for the lamps, filled salt and pepper-pots, and husked the corn.

The close of August came quite too soon, and the household looked forward with regret to a return to town; for there had been a month of such joy of living, such healthfulness, such happy, helpful companionship as could scarce be measured.

“Just think, Rob,” said Margaret, while she strolled along the beach with her husband on their last evening at Juniper Point, “we balanced accounts last night, and it has cost only six dollars a week for each of us.”

“I tell you, little woman, it is great returns for the expenditure.”

IX

HOUSECLEANING BEGINS

"WHAT! Housecleaning already?" asked Margaret Kerr, one breezy morning. Mrs. Griswold was hanging clothes on the line. Norah was washing windows.

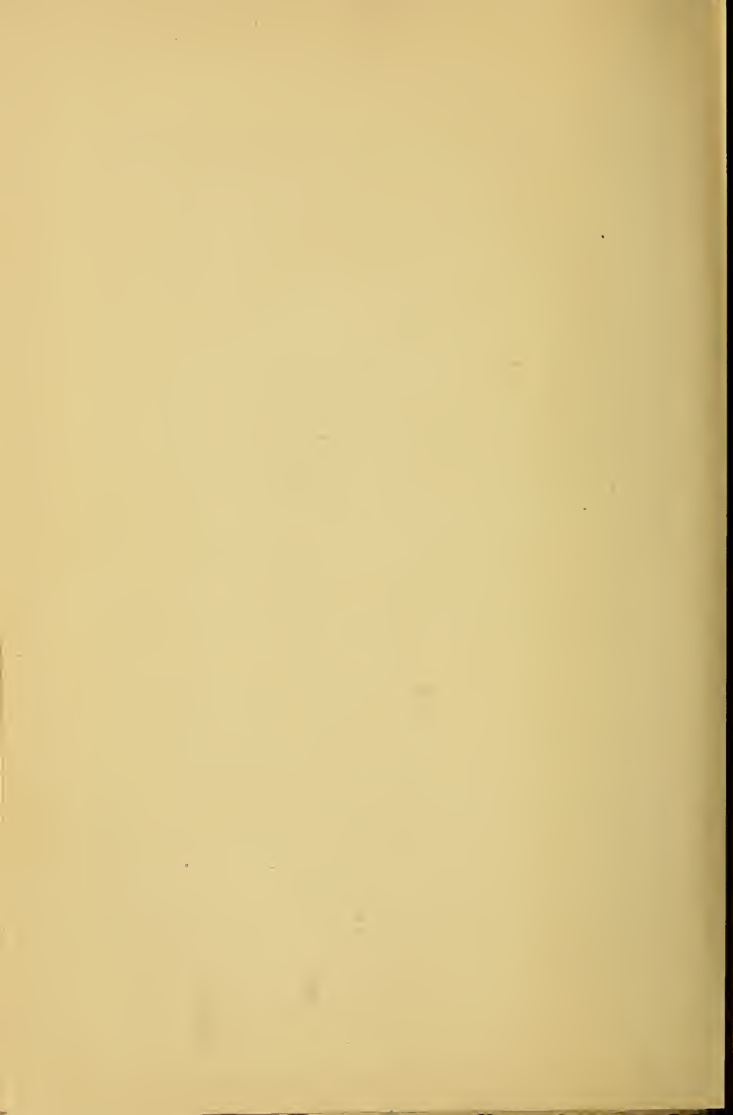
"Cool weather arrived early this month," answered the neighbor. "I'm taking advantage of it to begin cleaning. Last autumn we were late in getting at work, and the furnace had to be started before we were half through."

"Have you dumped the entire wardrobe of the household outdoors?" Mrs. Kerr laughed, while she pointed to a heap of clothes on the grass.

"I've emptied bureaus and closets of everything. I might have looked them over indoors, but it is such a cheerful day I enjoy being out. Besides, I can find, in the search-



PLATE XXI.—A. Grandma can sew the rags for a carpet in two weeks. B. These shelves hold piles of magazines.



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ing sunlight, stains which would otherwise escape me. It also takes a good deal of dirt out of the house; wearing apparel collects such an astonishing amount of grit."

While she talked she sorted things into piles. "This lot," she explained, "are the girls' thin frocks, which may help out their next summer's wardrobe. I am looking them over to see if they need mending, then I'll have them washed and packed away rough-dry and unstarched. These thin woollen clothes I am examining for stains which yield to gasoline or ammonia. When every spot has been removed I will give them a thorough brushing, let them hang all day in the sun, then fold and pack away. This heap of worn-out underwear and cotton things I will tear into convenient pieces for window rags, dusters, and cloths for cleaning paint. The pieces of old linen can be cut into strips for broad and narrow bandages, then I will sterilize them and put them away sewed into bags of cheesecloth till they are required for sickness or an accident."

"Is this the ragbag heap?" asked Margaret.

"No. A year ago I visited the exhibit of Deerfield industries and saw some beautiful rugs, which sell at high prices. They were nothing but rag carpet, only it was rag carpet made artistic. First the rags are dipped in a vegetable dye which never fades. I will use brown made from fresh black walnut bark. Everything from grays to white cotton will come from the dye-pot olive browns in all tones. Then it is cut into very fine strips and sewed."

"Are you going to sew them yourself?"

"No. I will give the job to an old lady who is in need of work. She can sew the rags in two weeks. It costs twenty-five cents a yard to weave the carpet. I have material enough to make rugs for the sitting-room and two chambers; they will wear like the traditional iron. We have just finished the attic. I am going up there now; would you like to see how I arranged it?"

Mrs. Kerr followed with an armful of clothes which were ready to pack away. At

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one end of the attic was Mrs. Griswold's study. She led the way to it first.

"I have had shelves built here," she explained, "to hold piles of magazines which covered a corner of the floor and made sweeping an impossibility. At one end I have saved space for boxes of all sorts. Here I had a tool shelf built."

"This is splendid," cried Margaret.

It held all sorts of tools that a woman could use, — a hand-saw, a hatchet, screw-drivers, and hammers. There were also hooks and nails of every sort, screws and tacks in a partitioned box.

"My tool bench used to be downstairs. It was really handier there, only things were continually being borrowed and never returned. Now there is no excuse for Norah or one of the children or my husband — he is a delinquent as often as any of them — saying they do not know where things are kept."

On the wall behind each of the tools was painted its outline in India ink.

"Things never wait now for a carpenter

or the man of the house," said Mrs. Griswold. "One day I went to a hardware store and told the clerk I would buy five dollars' worth of tools if he would show me how to use them. I learned how to put in a screw and how to take it out, how to use a gimlet and a monkey-wrench. I have a little of everything here."

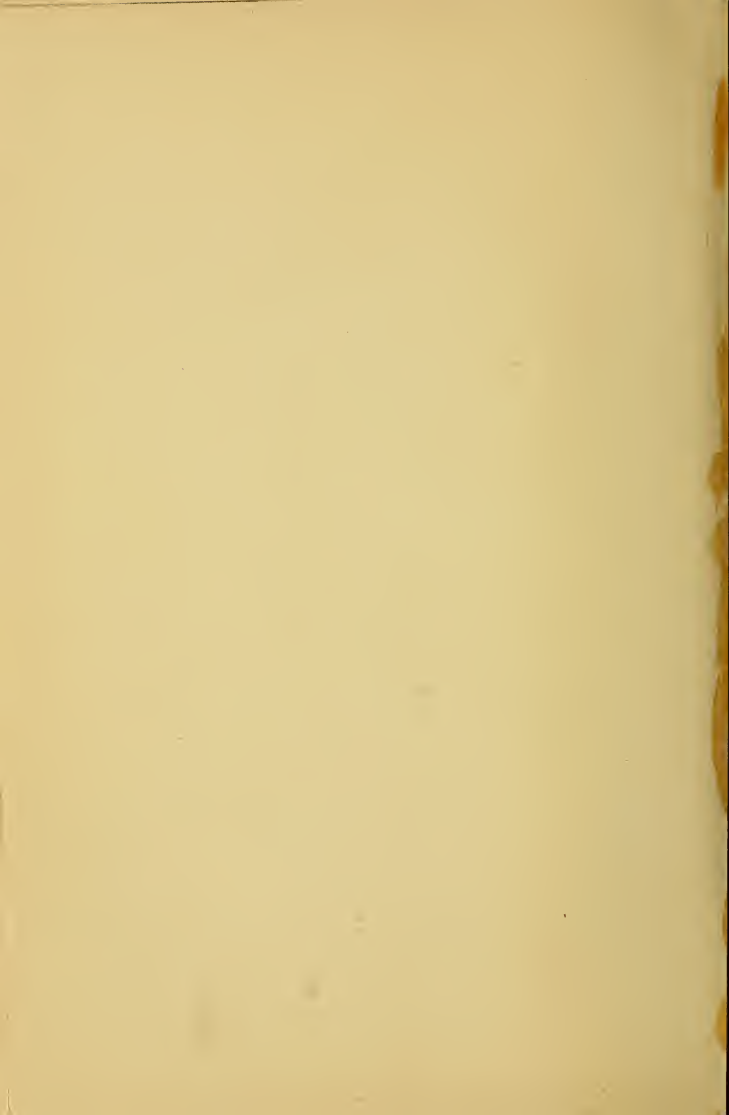
She pointed to the lower shelf. It held a bar of solder and a soldering-iron for mending leaks in pots or wash-boilers, a roll of electric tape to wind about leaking pipes or hose, putty, and a glazier's knife. There were paint-brushes of varied sizes, a glue-pot, paints, varnishes, stains, enamels, floor polishes, wax and oils, turpentine and driers, sheets of sand-paper, plaster of paris, upholsterer's and cobbler's needles, cement, a scissors sharpener, — almost the outfit of a man-of-all-work's bench.

"How did you ever think of trying such work?" queried Margaret Kerr.

"One day I reckoned from my expense book that twenty or thirty dollars a year go out for small repairs. I watched the work-



*P*LATE XXII.—Here I have my tool corner.



men who came to do odd jobs, — the paperer, who filled holes in a chipped wall with plaster of paris, then covered it with paper; the man who put in a pane of glass; the plumber, who mended a tiny leak or opened a choked pipe. Thus I learned how to do such work myself. I am teaching Raymond to make himself useful; he can put in a pane of glass or solder a leaking pot as well as a professional. Occasionally I hand my husband a bill for the tinkering done about the house; he pays what he would if a glazier or plumber came. This spring Raymond earned the two dollars we always gave the man to put in window screens and doors. It makes the boy independent; besides, I am training a good husband for some woman."

"Would you begin with the attic when housecleaning?" Margaret asked.

"Clean one room at a time. Our grandmothers used to make a mighty upheaval each spring and autumn. We, with our bare floors and rugs, light furniture and better facilities for work, can do the cleaning of a house on

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a quiet instalment plan, instead of having a great hurlyburly. If it is possible, take all the furniture out of a room you are cleaning. Have the bed taken apart, brush it with a whisk broom and wash it. Put the mattress, pillows, spread, and blankets in the sunshine. Let me suggest to you how to dress. I had tripped and fallen from stepladders and had my skirts dragged and soiled till one spring I grew desperate. I donned gymnasium bloomers over a short-sleeved blouse with a sailor collar. I wear the most comfortable house-shoes I know,—a pair of gynosium slippers.”

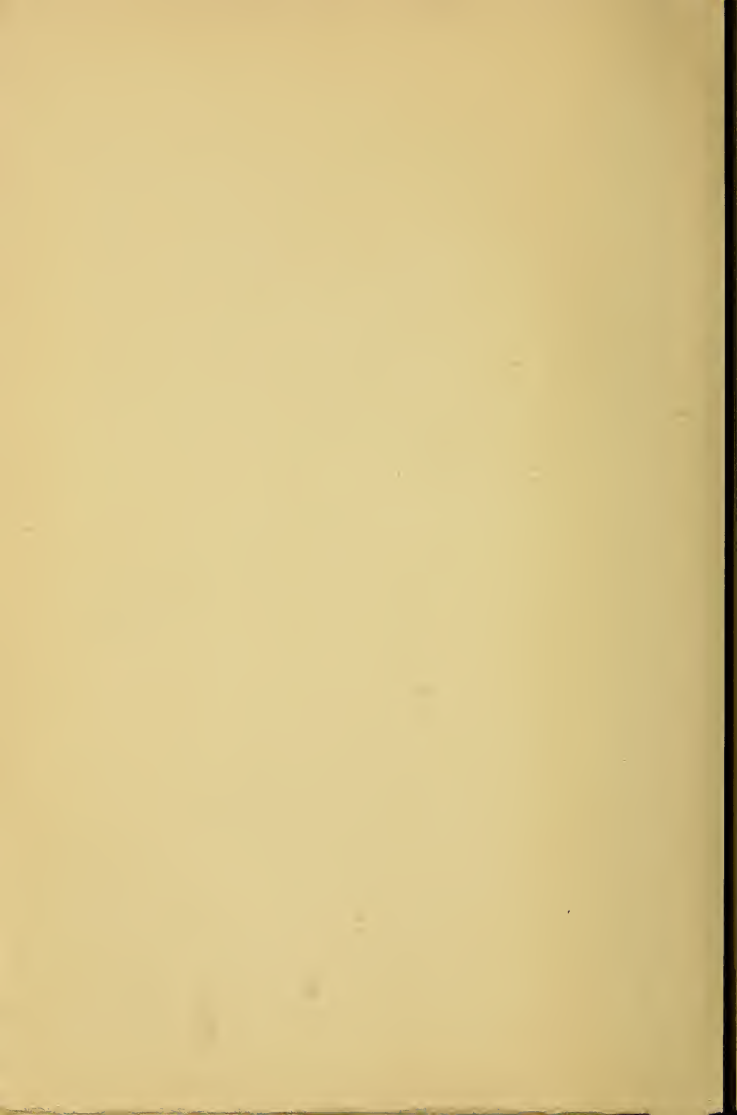
“Do I require special tools for house-cleaning?”

“Come downstairs and see our outfit. It may suggest things you do not have.”

In a closet stood a step-ladder, brooms, and dust-pans, mop-pail, and a mop with rags in it, a long-handled window-brush, a broom covered with a slip of gray cotton flannel, a rattan rug-beater, a drawer filled with bundles of cheesecloth, old silk and chamois, pumice-



P^{LATE XXIII.}—*A.* Raymond puts in screen doors and window screens. *B.* Wear gymnasium slippers when house cleaning.



stone, furniture polish, ammonia, whiting, borax, and linseed oil.

“What an assortment of stuff!” exclaimed Margaret.

“They are all necessary for the proper cleaning of a house. If you have never cleaned a room, let me tell you how to begin. Take down the draperies and shades, then carry out pictures, furniture, and rugs. Close the doors and open the windows. With the flannel-covered broom go over the walls and ceiling. I use a painter’s four-inch bristle brush to get the dust off mouldings and ledges, afterward cleaning them with a cheesecloth duster. Wipe the dirt from the window-frames. Lift the registers, spread a newspaper on the floor, and brush out the dirt on it. Clean the hot-air pipe with a damp cloth. Now begin to sweep with short perpendicular strokes and take up the dirt. While the dust is settling clean the woodwork. The interior of your house is finished with natural wood, which is much easier to care for than a painted surface. Search for soiled places and clean

them with a woollen rag moistened in turpentine. Mix equal parts of turpentine and paraffin oil and rub it into the wood. A dry woollen cloth and elbow grease gives the surface a fine polish. Wash the painted floor of the chambers with warm water. Do not use soap or a scrubbing-brush that removes the paint. Now wash the windows."

"With the long brush Norah is using?" asked Margaret.

"That is not the first job. We begin by cleaning the shutters. Sometimes after one has just washed the windows there comes a rain storm, and the glass is as dirty as if it had never been touched. It is not dirt in the air, the rain has washed the dust from the shutters. Before we touch the windows I close the shutters and turn the hose upon them, first opening, then shutting the slats. Afterward they are thrown open, and every window has a good flushing from the hose. Clean the outside first, then the inside. Wash the wood-work, using a skewer to pick dirt from the corners. Have a pailful of tepid water soft-

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ened by ammonia. Polish with clean soft cloths and tissue paper. For the last polish we use a chamois ball. It is made from scraps of chamois; any old skin may be cut in shreds. String it bead fashion with a darning-needle and a bit of twine, then tie tightly together. The chamois ball can be washed in soapy water and dried. It lasts for years, and polishes glass as nothing else will do. There are many finishing touches in housecleaning, such as washing gas-fixtures and globes, dusting picture-frames, polishing furniture, and cleaning mirrors."

"How do you keep your polished floors in such fine condition?"

"By the aid of a weighted brush. It is dropped on a waxed surface and pushed back and forth till the floor begins to take on a fine polish. At first it moves hard, but after being pushed back and forth a few times it slides easily."

"You spoke of furniture polish," said Margaret; "what kind do you use?"

"Our druggist puts it up," said Mrs. Gris-

wold. "But first wash furniture which is overcast with finger marks. If upholstered, give it a smart brushing to bring out the dust. Wipe the woodwork with a cloth wrung from warm milk. Soak a woollen cloth with the furniture polish, shaking it first — then polish with cheesecloth. Here is a formula for the polish: One gill of powdered rottenstone, one gill of cold drawn linseed oil, one gill of turpentine, one gill of naphtha, one gill of strong solution of oxalic acid, one gill of alcohol, one gill of cold water to which a tablespoonful of sulphuric acid has been gradually added.

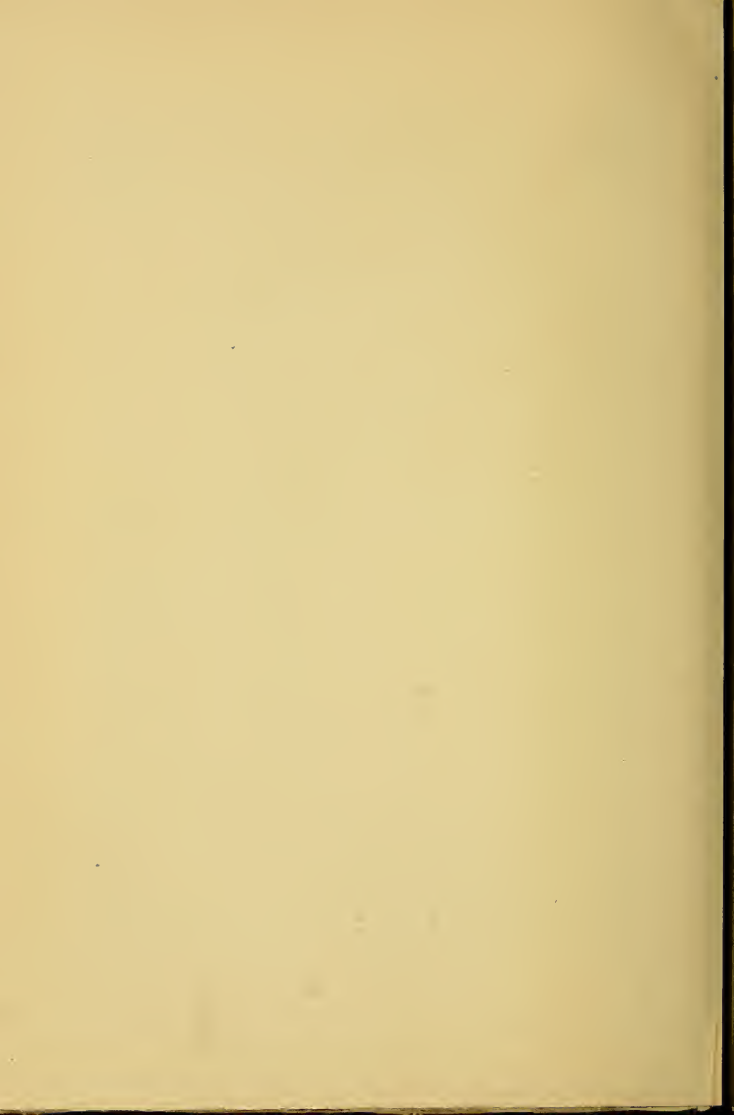
"Keep the bottle corked. This mixture will remove white stains from a polished, painted, or varnished surface. Yesterday I noticed you did some energetic scrubbing of your enamelled sink. Did you get it clean?"

"Not wholly," answered Margaret.

"Try kerosene on it," advised Mrs. Griswold, "then wash thoroughly with soapy water. I keep a wooden skewer above the sink, twist a bit of rag about it and clean every ledge and crevice. Afterward fill the



*P*LATE XXIV.—Use a weighted brush for polished floors.



dish basin several times with boiling water and thoroughly flush the sink and waste pipe. Three times a day we pour five or six gallons of hot water through the sink pipes. Dish water generally holds liquid grease, which coagulates when it reaches the cold pipes. To this sticky lining particles that get through the drainer attach themselves; the result is clogged pipes and a plumber. Once a day Norah pours down a pint of hot solution of washing soda. This dissolves the grease, the flood of hot water carries it away and leaves the pipes clean."

X

LAYING IN THE WINTER'S FOOD SUPPLY

"How much of that surplus housekeeping money can you afford to spend this month?" asked Mrs. Griswold one afternoon while Mrs. Kerr helped her to darn stockings.

"I have forty-three dollars laid away," said the young housewife, proudly.

"Do you feel as if you ought to use it now?"

"I'll squander it any time on your advice," she answered laughing.

"I will not suggest squandering," said the older woman. "In fact, I had planned to help you save money."

"How?"

"I'm going down street to-morrow to lay in my winter's supply of food. The larger amount one can spend, the cheaper prices are. By purchasing co-operatively we can both save

money. My grocer telephoned to-day that new canned fruits and vegetables are in, as well as a fresh stock of all sorts of goods. I buy in large quantities every autumn. He gives me the lowest prices and the best goods. You can make your forty-three dollars go as far as fifty-three, if judiciously spent. Although I believe in patronizing a small suburban market, it is exactly the opposite with a grocery. You may easily guess why. The store which has large sales keeps the freshest goods, because the stock is cleared out quickly."

"Are n't there some groceries better purchased in small quantities?"

"Yes, such things as cereals, graham flour, corn meal and dried fruits grow mouldy or wormy in warm weather. During the winter they spoil less easily. In cold weather one can store such things as lard, oil, and butter, but in summer they might grow rancid."

The visit to the grocery was very interesting. Mrs. Kerr wandered off to gaze at rows of delectable canned things, little button

mushrooms and plump truffles, stuffed olives, golden jellies, French marrons, maraschino cherries and shell walnuts.

"Dear! how these dainties make me wish I were rich," she sighed.

"Yes, indeed," laughed Mrs. Griswold, "only people with simple appetites and wholesome digestions must pass them by. Come, I want to introduce you to my groceryman. He knows his goods thoroughly and is honest. You are always sure of good treatment and courtesy from him."

"Don't you lose customers?" asked Margaret, when he classed something they had chosen "inferior goods."

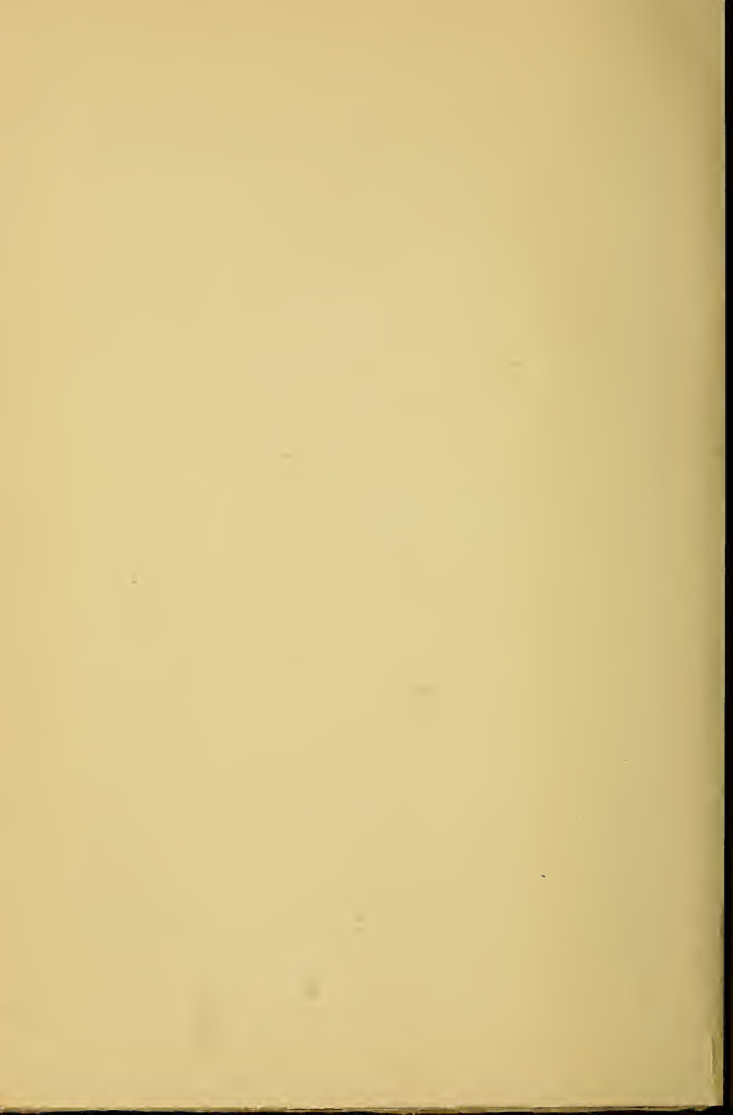
"I don't lose such customers as Mrs. Griswold," he answered, "she knows too well what's what."

Their order seemed to Mrs. Kerr extensive enough to feed a boarding house family. She said so to her neighbor.

"I am reckoning on your household using one-fourth of everything; the remainder is no more than I usually purchase. Many of



PLATE XXV.—A. One afternoon Margaret helped her friend darn stockings. B. Meat chopper grinding crumbs.



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these goods will carry us over till next autumn."

They bought tea by the ten-pound box, unground coffee by the sack and bacon by the strip. Canned salmon, sardines, boned chicken, tomatoes, corn and peas were ordered by the case.

"Our sojourn at the seashore," said Mrs. Griswold, "and busy days which followed our return, destroyed my chance of putting up August fruits, — peaches, pears, plums and green gages. I do not know if I would have canned them had I been at home. Last fall, these fruits were very expensive, so I preserved few of them. I mentioned this to the groceryman and he introduced me to such a splendid brand of California fruits that I almost decided never to can any more peaches or plums. I could not rival their luscious flavor, or preserve them in such excellent shape. Besides, when one considers the cost, the waste and work in putting up peaches, the gas consumed in preserving them, and the wear and tear on one's strength during a hot

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month, I believe they are cheaper at eighteen or twenty cents a can — what they cost by the case — than if I preserved them myself.”

“Here is the brand you had,” said the grocer, “nothing in the market touches it. Every peach or plum is perfect in shape and the light syrup, while sweet enough, does nothing to detract from the flavor of the fruit.”

“I will be glad to have part of a case,” said Margaret. “We are so fond of them.”

“The can is rather large for your small family. You can pour what you do not use, however, into a pint jar and seal it tight; it will keep for a week.”

The young housewife watched and listened while her neighbor made the purchases. She learned to distrust a can of fruit or vegetables which was dented or misshapen.

“You will find its contents spoiled,” said Mrs. Griswold, decisively. “Besides, its price gives it away — something must be wrong with green peas which sell for eight cents a can.”

She learned that good flour had a pleasant odor, and a slightly yellow tinge, that bread flour crumbles away in a mealy fashion when a handful of it is unclashed, while pastry flour remains in a smooth lump.

That afternoon the grocery wagon made a special trip to the Griswold house.

"This looks like a grocery store," said Margaret when she stepped into the kitchen.

"It does seem like a big store of food for two families, but wait till next summer, then see how it will have vanished. Raymond will carry your goods across the yard in his express wagon. Robert can store them away for you when he comes home. I had nothing delivered at your house except the barrels of flour and sugar, a sack of coffee and a can of saltines. A discount is given on one big order so we will divide everything that can be weighed, measured or counted."

Mrs. Kerr's division of the order consisted of five pounds of tea, a dozen cans of boned chicken, two strips of bacon, a ham, one dozen boxes of sardines, one dozen cans of salmon,

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half a gallon of salad oil, six bottles of olives, six bottles of pickles, twelve cans each of peaches, pears, blue plums, green gages, corn and peas, six bottles of grape juice, six jars of beef extract, six packages of cornstarch, ten pounds of rice, five pounds of tapioca, half a bushel of beans, half a case of macaroni, five pounds of cocoanut, a dozen packages of gelatine, one box of soap, two bars of castile soap, a dozen packages of washing powder, ten pounds of washing soda, two boxes of starch, five pounds of baking powder, six bottles of ammonia, six cans of stove polish, twelve packages of saleratus, three pounds of candles, twenty pounds of salt, a dozen packages of matches, five pounds of prunes, twelve pounds of raisins, and a gallon of molasses.

"Well," said Margaret, when she saw her purchases piled up ready for transportation, "the problem now is, where are they to go? My pantry is full already."

"I've had that in mind," said Mrs. Griswold, "and I would suggest that you turn

into a store-room the closet which opens off your dining-room."

"That's a great idea. It is no earthly use now. All sorts of things get tossed into it, and it collects a lot of old rubbish. Only I can't put everything on the floor."

"No, but Robert is a good amateur carpenter. My husband will lend him a hand. He can fit up the closet with plenty of shelves, leaving space for the sugar-barrel. Draw on us for things to store your groceries in. In the attic I have a collection of biscuit tins, imperfect fruit cans, and stone jars. Tomorrow I will run across and help to settle the store-room."

When the closet was in spick and span order Mrs. Kerr gazed at it with real housewifely content. On tin boxes and cans she had pasted labels; one could see the contents of glass jars. Tea and coffee were stored in tightly covered canisters. Oil was decanted into pint bottles and securely corked, one bottle being set in the refrigerator for immediate use. The bacon and ham in their canvas wrappers were

hung under the lowest shelf. Rice, tapioca, barley, beans, cocoanut, soda, and prunes were stored in glass jars and tin pails, while packages, cans, and bottles, were set in separate blocks, with the names outward so one could see at a glance what was what. At one end was "a kitchen corner," as Mrs. Kerr called it, where were stored ammonia, starch, washing-soda, stove-polish, candles, and matches.

"The soap should be dried in the attic before it is used," advised her neighbor. "Polly will be delighted to pile it up log-cabin fashion for you. Soap that is thoroughly dried lasts twice as long as when damp and soft. My plan is to keep the pantry supplied from the store-room. When a jar begins to go low I refill it. If you follow this plan there will be no necessity for constant visits to the store-room. Cover everything tightly, and if anything gets spilt, sweep it up at once; this is the only way to avoid an invasion of mice."

That evening, when bills were footed up, Mrs. Kerr discovered she had eight dollars left. "Put it away," advised her neighbor,

"till it becomes twelve or fourteen, then you will have enough to buy the winter's stock of vegetables, apples, and butter. These supplies I purchase late in October from an old farmer. I have dealt with him for nine years; he gives us the choicest of everything at the same price he gets from the stores. Every autumn I put up forty dozen eggs, by storing them in a water glass preparation. They keep in good condition till spring."

Mrs. Kerr had saved fifteen dollars before the end of October. It purchased butter, eggs, potatoes, apples, and root vegetables.

Mr. Griswold showed Robert how to make cellar bins for storing vegetables. In the bottom of one was put a lot of dry sand, on which the potatoes were heaped.

"Leave this bin empty at the right of it," advised Mr. Griswold. "Occasionally during the winter potatoes must be picked over; sometimes they rot slightly or sprout. Keep an empty barrel beside your apples for the same purpose. They should be examined once a week. A decaying apple will rot a peck

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around it. Carrots, parsnips, turnips, and beets should be stored among sand. Cabbages and squash we keep on a shelf where ventilation can reach them. Onions I tie into strong paper-bags and hang from nails in the rafters."

The butter was put up in lots of ten pounds each, packed solidly in stone jars and covered with a piece of wet cheesecloth full of salt. Mrs. Griswold declared against the wooden tubs in which it was delivered.

"I always empty them," she said, "and repack the butter into jars. Sooner or later it will taste of the wood. My way of using it is to lift the salt out once a week and scoop several pounds of butter into a small jar. I pack the top of the large jar level, then lay in the salt again."

Late in October there came a spell of wet weather which kept people in the house. This allowed Margaret a few leisure afternoons. She gave the time to what she had long wished to do, — a number of small jobs which would lighten labor when work was hurried. Half

a box of salt codfish was cut with the kitchen shears in flakes large enough for creaming, and packed into a glass jar. She took the broken bread which had accumulated, removed the crusts, and dried it in a slow oven till light-brown and crisp. It was put through the finest knife of the meat-chopper and sifted. The meal-like crumbs were put in a jar and labelled "For Croquettes," while the coarser were saved for scolloped dishes. She made a quart of mayonnaise, with Frances Griswold to help her. The yolks of four eggs — left over from making snow-cake — were dropped in a deep bowl and mixed with two teaspoonfuls of mustard, two teaspoonfuls of salt, two teaspoonfuls of powdered sugar, a dash of red pepper, and a teaspoonful of vinegar. The bowl was set in a plate filled with cracked ice, and while Mrs. Kerr turned a large egg-beater, Frances poured in salad oil, at first drop by drop, then in a thin stream. As it thickened, a quarter of a cupful of vinegar and the same quantity of lemon juice was added by teaspoonfuls. When three cupfuls of oil had been beaten

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in, the mayonnaise was of a fine, creamy consistency.

Among other rainy-day tasks she stoned raisins and cleaned currants, drying them thoroughly in a cool oven. She grated chocolate for pudding or frosting, and put dry cheese scraps through the meat-chopper, to be used for macaroni dishes. She rubbed a quart of lard into three quarts of salted pastry flour and set it in a covered jar, ready to be mixed with ice-water when required — for pie crust. She made lemon syrup, boiling four cups of sugar with a quart and a half of water for twenty minutes, then adding two-thirds of a cupful of lemon juice. It was bottled and set away for lemonade or for a jelly.

Mrs. Griswold had taught Margaret how to make onion butter, a flavoring so handy and delicious for sauces and *réchauffés* that she prepared a tumblerful every month. She cut seven onions into slices and put them over a slow fire with a cupful of butter. The heat was strong enough merely to brown and shrivel the onion, not to blacken it. The flavored

butter was strained into a jelly tumbler and covered.

Browned flour — which is nothing but flour heated in a spider till dry and brown — she prepared by the pint and set away in a covered jar to keep for future use.

XI

MARGARET'S THANKSGIVING DINNER

"DEAR, grateful little woman," said Mrs. Griswold, while she read a note which had come in the morning's mail.

"What is it?" asked Frances.

"An invitation for Thanksgiving."

"From whom?" cried the family in chorus.

"Listen," said the mother.

"DEAR NEIGHBOR, — Do you realize what you stand for in this family? — a gentle sympathizer, a patient, kindly teacher of wholesome living and true economy. Robert and I want to show our gratitude. Be our guest on Thanksgiving Day with your household and any friends you have planned to invite. Let me serve, unaided, a dinner that will make you proud and make me happy.

"Your pupil,

"MARGARET KERR."

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"We 'll go," said Mr. Griswold.

"But," his wife hesitated, "Grandma, Grandpa, Uncle Tim, and Sally are coming."

"Margaret added 'and company.' She means what she says; the bigger the crowd, the more she will enjoy it."

"I guess you're right," she responded. "I'll run over and accept."

She had accepted and stood saying good-by, then she turned:

"The ultimatum is I am not to help?"

"Not a hand's turn," answered Margaret, laughing.

"Can't I send Norah here for the forenoon?"

"No," laughed Margaret again. "I'm selfish; I don't want to divide up the credit of this dinner with even Norah."

"All that is required of us, then, is simply to accept and to arrive at two o'clock?"

"There, now, you understand," said her neighbor.

Margaret Kerr started Tuesday morning for the market. She had written her menu

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and marketing list; she knew just what she wanted and where to get it. Here is the dinner she intended to serve:

<i>Oyster Soup.</i>	<i>Saltines.</i>
<i>Celery.</i>	<i>Salted Almonds.</i>
<i>Roast Turkey.</i>	<i>Cranberry Jelly.</i>
<i>Mashed Potatoes.</i>	<i>Squash.</i>
<i>Creamed Onions.</i>	
<i>Chicken Pie.</i>	
<i>Lettuce Salad.</i>	<i>Toasted Cheese Sandwiches.</i>
<i>Pumpkin, Mince, Apple Pie.</i>	
<i>Cup St. Jacques.</i>	<i>Macaroons.</i>
<i>Fruit.</i>	<i>Nuts. Raisins.</i>
<i>Wafers.</i>	<i>Cheese. Coffee.</i>

Mrs. Griswold's teaching was to Margaret what the lessons at school are to a child. It had led to deeper study, not found in books. Every time she visited a market she learned something from the man behind the counter or some customer skilled in housewifery. Sometimes she visited a place of interest about the city, — a natural ice plant, a flour-mill, a cold storage warehouse, a canning factory, a bakery, a wholesale fruit house, a big market-garden, or a country creamery. She

attended a series of lectures on hygiene and dietetics; she was learning to put into practical use some of the studies of her college days.

Her first task on reaching the market was to choose a hen turkey weighing fourteen pounds. The skin and flesh were white, the legs black and smooth, the breast was broad and plump, while the neck was short. The breastbone was pliable, which showed youth. Its weight betokened good feeding and a delicate flavor. She picked out two chickens with firm flesh, smooth, yellow skins, feet and legs which were free from scales, and with breast-bones which were cartilage. The lettuce she bought was the Boston variety, with fine outside leaves and a head as solid as a small cabbage, having plenty of heart, creamy tinted, crisp, and curly. She chose the most expensive cranberries in the market. They were like rich-hued rubies, solid, large, and spicy. The oranges she judged by their weight and their thin skins; bananas she selected because they were small and unspotted,

and walnuts for their clean shells and weight.

When Robert arrived for luncheon her purchases were unwrapped and laid on the kitchen table. He whistled when he saw them.

"Great layout, is n't it? But, say, little woman," and his voice grew serious, "don't you think you had better engage somebody for Thursday?"

"Rob, don't," she pleaded. "I want to get the dinner myself."

"I suppose you know the old joke about company sitting down at table with a roasted hostess."

"Nonsense," she cried, "it's a parboiled hostess. You'll find a very cool hostess, I can assure you. Besides — I have engaged a woman —"

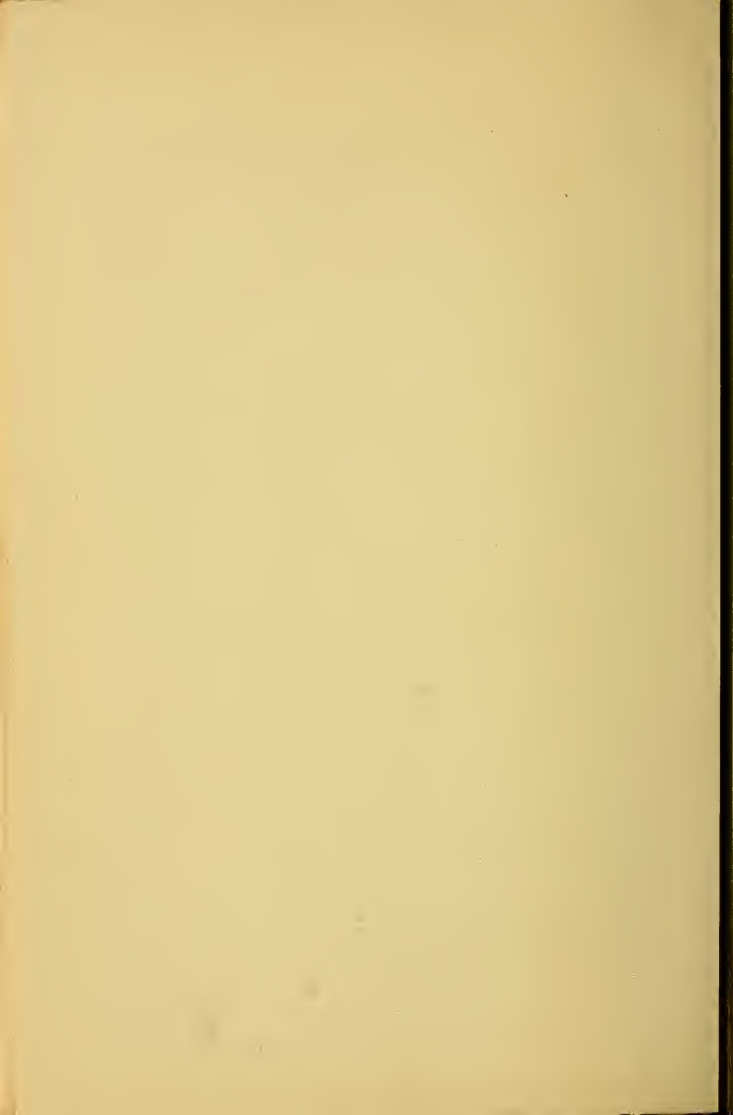
"Good."

"To wash the dishes," added his wife. "I should go crazy with her asking constantly what she will do."

"Still, I'm relieved on the score of the dishes. Now, may I offer my services for Thursday morning?"



PLATE XXVII.—A. Something new in a crust. B. She had found an old-fashioned recipe for pumpkin pie.



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“I’ll accept them till you begin to grow wobble-headed; then you are discharged instantly.”

Margaret did all she possibly could on Wednesday, saving only what had to be last tasks for Thanksgiving morning. The almonds were shelled, covered with boiling water, and allowed to stand for a few moments till the brown skins were loosened, then they were rubbed clean between coarse towels. Margaret knew their delicate flavor was ruined by frying them in oil or butter, as is frequently advised in cook-books. She put the almonds in a pan, dusted them lightly with fine salt, and set them in a moderate oven, shaking them occasionally till delicately browned. She made the cranberry jelly, putting a quart of the berries in a covered saucepan with a cup and a half of boiling water, to cook slowly for twenty minutes. The fruit was rubbed through a fine strainer; a pint of sugar was added to it; after five minutes’ cooking it was poured into a wet mould and set in the cold pantry. Crust for the pies was made and

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set on the ice. The pumpkin filling was prepared; mince meat had been made early in the month. A foundation for cup St. Jacques, which is a glorified lemon-ice, was prepared.

The base for the ice she prepared by making a syrup from one quart of water and two cups of sugar, boiled for twenty minutes. When it cooled, three-quarters of a cup of lemon juice was added, then it was strained and set away till ready to freeze.

Preparing the turkey was the most strenuous task. The bird had been cleanly picked, but there remained numerous long hair-like feathers, which she singed over a saucerful of burning alcohol. Afterward she washed the bird thoroughly, rinsed it under cold water, and wiped it dry. She cut the head off at the throat, leaving a long neck. The tendons had to be removed to make the dark meat more tender and juicy. She located where they lay in a hollow behind the leg, and cut the skin carefully. She slipped under one tendon the point of a knife-sharpener, holding firm the upper part of the leg. The tendon gave till

it lay like a loop over the skewer. One strong pull brought it out without tearing the flesh. When eight had been taken from each leg, she made a gash down the turkey's neck, cutting the skin to the bone. She folded it back over the breast and lifted out the crop carefully. The turkey was turned on its back, then a cut was made at the end of the breast-bone large enough to admit her finger and thumb, which loosened the intestines at the back and brought out the gizzard, heart, and liver. She took the greatest care not to break the gall. The lungs and kidneys were removed, the windpipe pulled away, and the oil-bag — a tiny gland which lies over the tail — was cut out. Mrs. Griswold had once impressed on her the necessity of removing this. "Few cooks know of its existence," she said. "It is the reservoir of thick oil which you see a bird peck at when it smooths its feathers. Often, while eating turkey at a hotel, I have tasted the disagreeable flavor of the oil-bag in the gravy."

Mrs. Kerr washed the turkey in cold water,

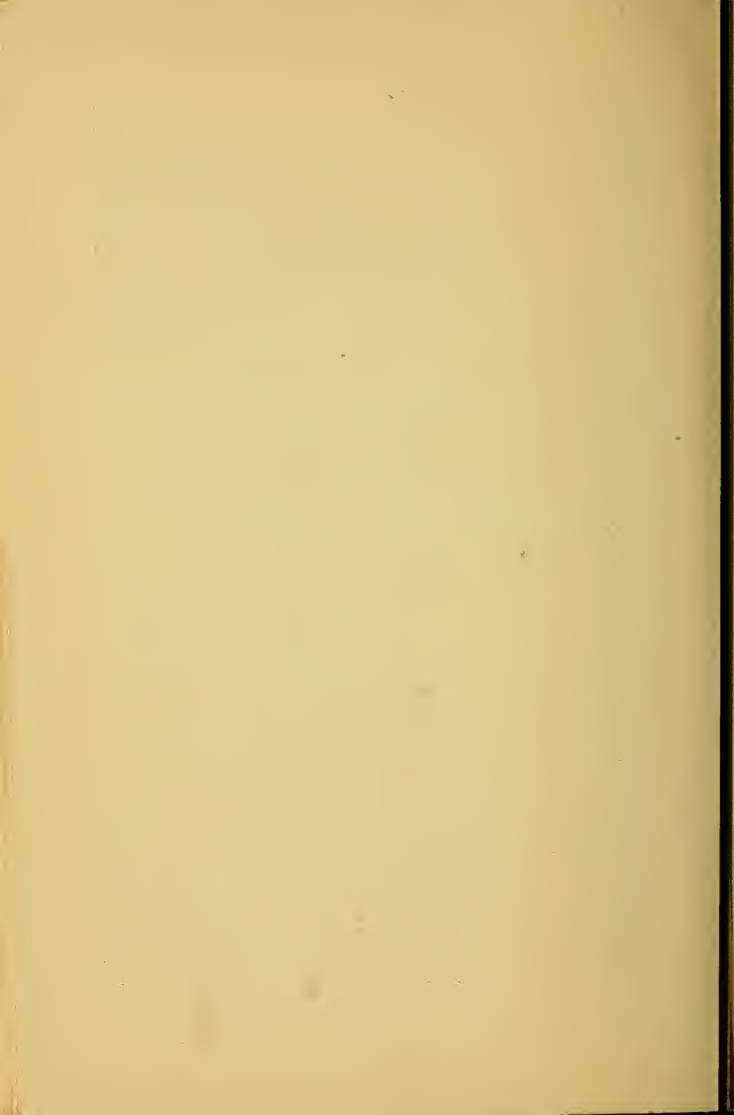
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then she dried it and set it away. The neck, gizzard, heart, and liver she cleaned and set in a saucepan to stew, for the chopped giblets were to be added to the gravy. The chickens were prepared exactly like the turkey, then cut in twelve pieces, — second joints, drumsticks, wings, the back in two pieces, and the breast in four fillets. They were put to stew, covered with boiling water. Half an onion, a sprig of parsley, a bit of bay-leaf, half a tablespoonful of salt, and a generous dust of pepper were added as seasoning. When nearly tender, they were lifted from the gravy, it was thickened with flour and water and cooked till reduced to a quart.

Breakfast was over early in the Kerr house Thursday morning. Robert helped energetically, from putting extra leaves in their small dining-table to freezing the lemon-ice. Margaret's first task was to set the table. Robert suggested chrysanthemums for a centre-piece. "They are beautiful," his wife answered, "but they cost money. Instead, bring me some ferns and oak leaves I saw yesterday in the woods.



PLATE XXVIII.—A. Margaret singed the turkey over a saucer of burning alcohol. B. The chicken was cut in twelve pieces.



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I can press out the leaves; they will arrange beautifully."

The table was simple but artistic. The red brown of the autumn leaves made a fine contrast against the dark ferns. Margaret used the largest leaves for dinner-cards, with her guests' names lettered in gold, and her choicest glass and silver.

When the dining-room was in order, she returned to the kitchen to stuff and truss the turkey. She put in the dressing by spoonfuls at the neck, filling the skin so the fowl might look plump when roasted. She trussed it by folding the skin of the neck close to the breast-bone. The wings were tucked neatly down, and with a single stitch the skin was fastened into place. The legs were folded close to the side, a trussing-needle with strong cotton was run through the body, brought back over the leg-joint, and tied securely. The drumsticks were tied and fastened securely to the rump.

At ten o'clock the oven was allowed to become thoroughly hot, then she set the turkey,

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breast down, upon a rack in the dripping-pan, rubbed all over with a creamy mixture made from half a cupful of butter mixed with five tablespoonfuls of flour. It was dusted with salt and pepper, and the bottom of the pan was dredged with flour. During the first hour of roasting, when the oven had to be quite hot, Margaret baked her pies. She had found in an old-fashioned cook-book a recipe for pumpkin pie similar to directions given by modern books, except that as the top of the pie began to grow firm a cup of thick cream was poured over it. Margaret's common-sense taught her that before the cream was absorbed the rim of crust would be burned, so she covered it with a round of buttered paper. When the pies came out she poured a cupful of boiling water into the dripping-pan and basted the turkey frequently. At eleven o'clock the lemon-ice was frozen hard. Within an hour Margaret had accomplished a number of tasks, — thin slices of bread were sandwiched with a cheese mixture ready to be toasted, the celery and lettuce were cleaned, the squash had been

steamed and seasoned, a crust was made for the chicken-pie, cheese was cut, bread sliced, — everything was ready to set on the table.

At one o'clock Margaret put the potatoes and onions to cook, then she ran upstairs to dress her hair and get into a company gown, which she covered with an all-over apron. Fifteen minutes later she was in the kitchen getting the chicken-pie ready for the oven, making a cream sauce for the onions, scalding the oysters before adding them to hot milk, mashing potatoes, and putting the last touches to the table. Then she lifted the turkey to its platter and made a gravy, to which the giblets were added.

One of the drawbacks of the gas-range, which had not yet been replaced by the coal-stove, was its lack of a warming closet. Margaret overcame this by setting the fourteen-inch oven over a burner at the back of the stove and keeping it hot. It held one set of plates after another, the onions and gravy; the turkey was set on top. The potatoes and squash were kept warm in double boilers.

When her company entered the dining-room Margaret stood waiting to receive them. Nobody would have guessed, to look at the hostess in her pretty gown, that she was cook and waitress. In the window stood a low buffet holding the dishes for the later courses. The pies were there, the salad on a tray, with its condiments, a plate of macaroons, nuts, raisins, and fruit, cheese, wafers, and sugar and cream. On the sideboard were dishes for two hot courses, also cranberry jelly and celery. The plates were removed quickly, and the hostess was back again in her seat.

When Margaret set the chicken-pie on the table, Mrs. Griswold exclaimed:

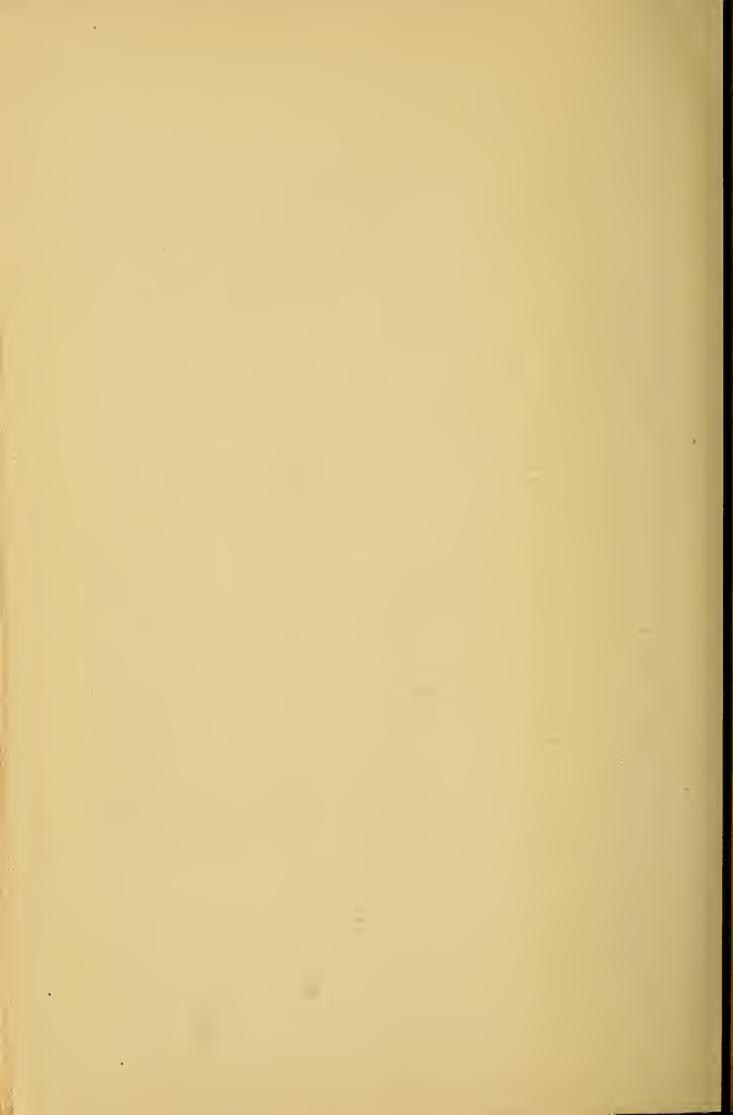
“What, something new in a crust?”

“No, something old,” laughed Margaret. “Years ago, when I was in boarding-school, I went with my roommate to her country home for Thanksgiving. I remembered the chicken-pie. Instead of a thick crust with a steam vent in it, there was a lid of brown biscuits laid closely together.”

“Yes,” said Mrs. Griswold; “it is delicious and beautifully light.”



PLATE XXIX.—A. The skin of the neck folded back, the wings tucked in and the legs folded close to the side. B. A low buffet held the dishes for the later courses.



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At the end of the dinner, while Robert drank a cup of coffee, he turned to Mrs. Griswold and proposed the following toast:

“Here’s to our guest, our mentor, our friend. Into this house she brought cheer, comfort, and happiness. The world would be filled with peaceful homes if every young couple in the experiment of housekeeping could discover such a patient, gracious, sympathetic, practical, neighborly neighbor. Some day we may prove our indebtedness, — we cannot speak it.”

XII

THE CHRISTMAS GIFTS OF A COOK

"ALL Christmas presents?" asked Mrs. Griswold one evening when she entered the Kerrs' cosey sitting-room.

Margaret was pinning names upon jaunty sofa-pillows, delicate bits of embroidery, and other odds and ends.

"Yes, I've nearly finished Christmas things. My list is full except for a few people who have been kind to us. I cannot spend much money, yet I want to remember Robert's stenographer and Copperfield, the book-keeper."

"Where do they live?"

"They board at the Ayres'."

"That is n't a genial place for Christmas. Take them a nice little plum pudding for dinner, piping hot, with a pitcher of brandy sauce. I have a fine old English recipe."

"That's a great idea," cried Margaret; "it

suggests another. Why not make things to eat for people who would appreciate them, — people who board or do their own work, or live on bakery stuff? ”

“ I ’ll join with you,” said Mrs. Griswold, heartily. “ I, too, have unremembered people on my list.”

“ What shall we make? ”

“ Let us jot down a list of eatables which can be transported picturesquely. Plum puddings with a sprig of holly tied to them, cream-filled ladylocks, candy, a box of pâtés, ready to be filled with creamed chicken or oysters, a cake, a pie, or a tumbler of mayonnaise.”

Mrs. Griswold and Margaret spent three days before Christmas preparing toothsome gifts they had planned. The first thing was the making of puff paste.

“ Put on a warm jacket,” suggested Mrs. Griswold. “ I ’ve got to open the windows and work in a chilly atmosphere. If puff paste gets warm it is ruined.”

“ How do you make it in summer? ”

“ I never make it; puff paste is too rich

to be digested in hot weather. Now for operations."

She scalded a large yellow bowl, then chilled it, and went through the same process with her hands. She dropped the butter in the bowl and let cold water run on it while she worked it.

"Why all this labor?" asked Margaret.

"I could not have fine flaky crust if the salt were left in the butter. You see it does not stick to my hands or the bowl. That is because they were washed in hot water, then in cold. Now the butter is waxy, so I must get all the water out of it."

She turned the bowl upper side down, patting the butter till not another drop of water flew from it, then she moulded it into an oblong piece, reserving a small slice which she said would measure about four tablespoonfuls. She sifted the flour in the bowl, rubbed in with the tips of her fingers the slice of butter, then wet with ice water till she had a light dough.

"I brought with me something which is

better for rolling pastry than a board." She shook out a square of canvas and spread it on the table; then she slipped on the rolling-pin a cover of stuff like knitted webbing. Into the grain of both fabrics she rubbed flour, shaking what was superfluous into the barrel.

"Nothing can stick to this now," she said. "Good puff paste must have enough flour in it, but not too much. The moulding cloth assures you of that."

She folded the dough into the floured moulding cloth and left it for five minutes to mellow. When she spread the cloth on the table she rolled and patted the dough till it had become a strip with square ends. The pat of butter was laid in the centre of this strip and the ends brought over envelope fashion and pinched tightly together.

"That is done to enclose air," Mrs. Griswold explained. "You know how puff paste looks, flake above flake. It is the air you enclose which raises the pastry. As I roll it you will see."

Wherever she found the paste growing

moist or the butter breaking through she rubbed flour into the moulding cloth and rolling-pin cover. With gentle little pats it was rolled again into another long strip, then folded and rolled again, always with the ends toward the centre, making the paste three fold. After four rollings it was set outdoors till perfectly hard. When well chilled it was rolled half an inch thick, and with a fluted cutter a number of rounds were cut for bottoms of the pâtés. The small cutter-shaped rings were brushed with cold water and laid on top of each other to build a well for filling. Small rounds left by the cutter were baked for lids to each pâté. Twenty-five minutes in the oven brought them out, crisp and brown.

“The ladylocks are an old-fashioned dainty,” said Mrs. Griswold. “My grandmother used to make them from trimmings of her pie crust. Filled with jam or whipped cream, we thought them a delectable morsel. I brought Granny’s old irons to bake them on.”

She cut from the trimmings of paste a long narrow ribbon, and, beginning at the small

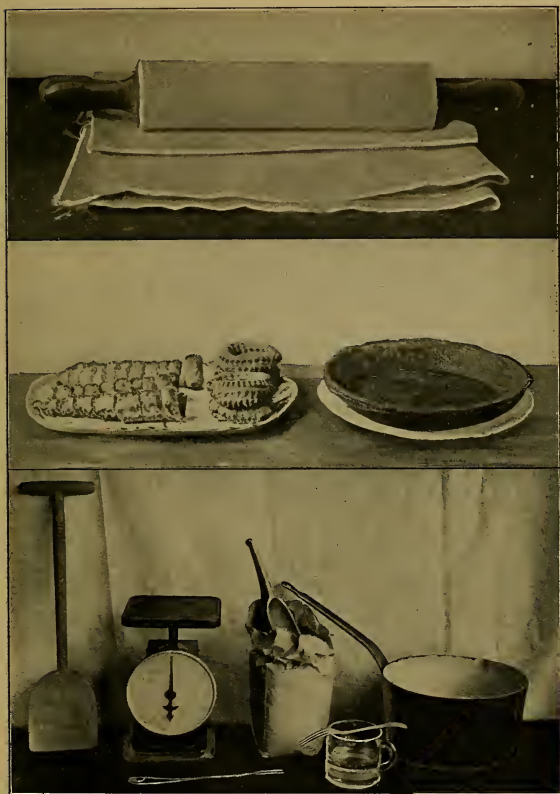


PLATE XXX.—A. Molding cloth and rolling pin cover. B. Lady locks, patés and a pie form. C. Utensils necessary when making fondant.



end of a buttered horn, wound it over and over, bringing the edges together till the iron was covered. They were baked brown, brushed with white of egg, dusted with granulated sugar and returned to the oven. For a pie form a deep pie plate was buttered on the outside and turned upside down on the moulding cloth. A round of paste was laid over it, fitted down neatly and then cut around the rim. It was pricked with a fork before baking, and came from the oven crisp and brown.

"Now for our fondant," said Mrs. Griswold, as she set the pastry to cool.

"Fondant is the foundation of all fine candies. We will use the marble top from the table in your sitting-room. Here are the scales for weighing our sugar, a paddle to beat the syrup into fondant, a fork and glass measuring cup half filled with cold water for testing the syrup."

Mrs. Griswold set a saucepan on the scales to weigh, into it went two and a half pounds of granulated sugar, a quarter of a teaspoon of cream of tartar and one and a half cups of

boiling water. The sugar was stirred till it melted, then the saucepan was set on the stove and heated till the syrup came to the boiling point. There was no further stirring. Mrs. Griswold occasionally dipped a fork in the bubbling liquid and dropped it in the cup of cold water. When the tiny crystal drops were a soft paste, which could be moulded between her fingers, she carried the saucepan to the slightly oiled marble slab and poured the boiling syrup in narrowing circles till it almost reached the edge of the marble. When it ceased to run it was stiffening about the edges so it could be rolled over. Mrs. Griswold took the wooden paddle and using it scraper fashion turned the hot syrup over and over. It began to grow opaque, then white. In five minutes the paddle was laid aside, she was kneading with quick, vigorous movement, as if the fondant was bread dough. Presently it lay under her hands snowy and soft.

“This must be laid away till to-morrow,” she said. “It should stand twenty-four hours before it can be moulded. The last job is plum

pudding. I always imagine it has a finer flavor when the ingredients stand over night."

The bread-pan was used for mixing. Into it was thrown one pound of currants, one pound of raisins, one pound of finely chopped suet, half a pound of brown sugar, four ounces of almonds, blanched and shredded, four ounces each of shaved citron, lemon peel and orange peel, one teaspoonful of salt, one grated nutmeg, one teaspoonful of ginger and cinnamon, half a teaspoonful of clove, and one pound of flour. This was tossed together, then over it was poured eight beaten eggs, the juice of one orange, one cup of brandy, and milk enough to make a batter, so it could be stirred. And vigorous stirring it got from Margaret and Mrs. Griswold.

"Why does it need so much stirring?" asked Margaret, as she laid down the wooden spoon.

"It is partly obeying superstition," said Mrs. Griswold. "I had a British grandmother who presided over the making of a plum pudding as if it were a rite. She said it would

never digest unless it were stirred by every member of the family. I doubt if it is all superstition; for a plum pudding to be at its best must be thoroughly blended."

Next morning the pudding had another energetic stir, then it was put into buttered moulds ready for steaming. As the puddings were destined for small families, baking-powder cans were chosen to cook them in. For the Copperfields one was steamed in a crinkled mould. They were set in a steamer over a kettle of water which boiled steadily for five hours. Plenty of water was poured in before the puddings were set on; for, as Mrs. Griswold explained, "if the water should stop boiling for two minutes we would have puddings which were sticky instead of rich and crumbly."

"Now for our candy," said Margaret, as she brought out a bowlful of creamy fondant, and the various things which Mrs. Griswold had ordered, — an abundance of parchment paper, several jars of colorings, bottles of flavoring extracts, pecan and walnut meats,

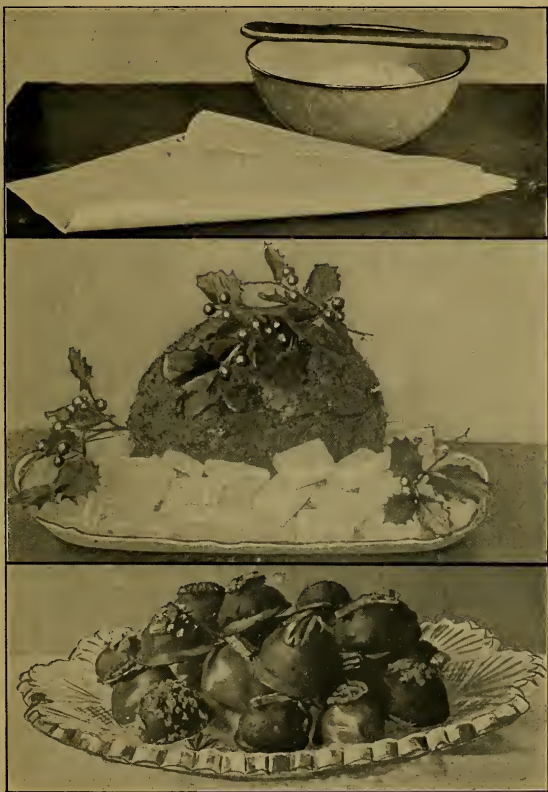
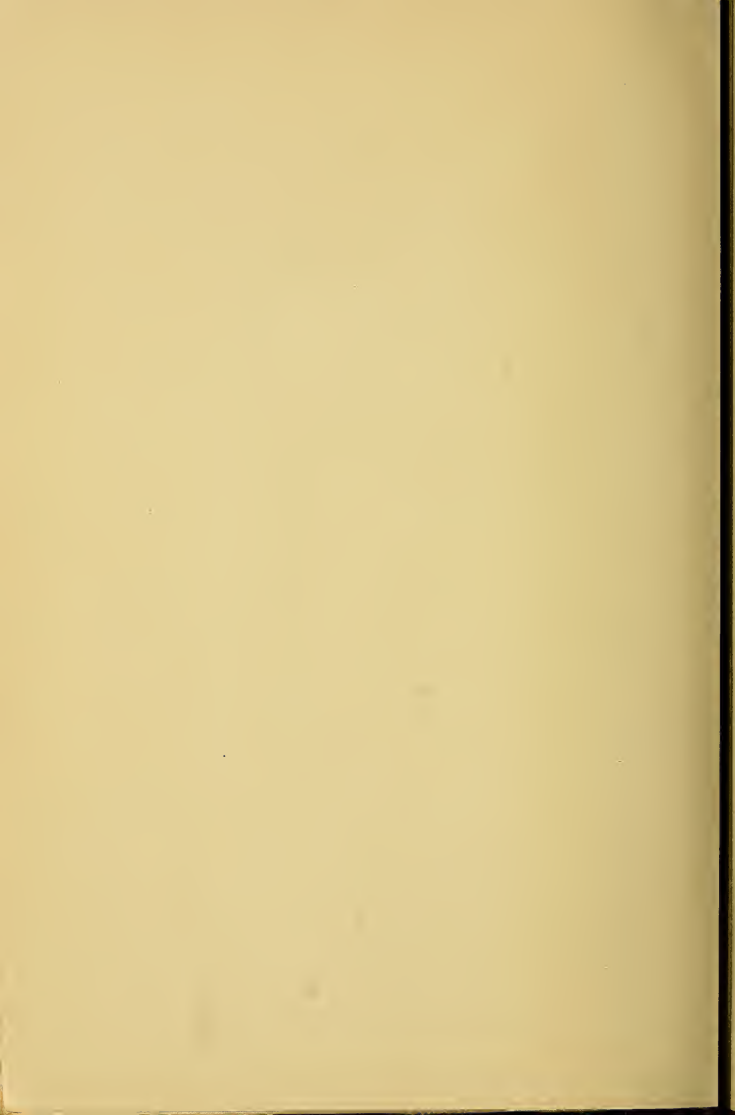


PLATE XXXI.—A. Pastry bag and icing. B. Plum pudding with garnish of lump sugar. C. Bonbons on a crystal plate.



a rich skinned orange, a saucer of cocoanut, two figs cut into shreds, a stick of angelica, candied cherries, and blanched almonds.

“The first job is to flavor and color small portions of the fondant,” said Mrs. Griswold, “for rolling centres. You see it has solidified, so we can cut it. It cannot be reduced again to creaminess or it will not harden. Therefore the amount of flavoring I will put in each lump of fondant must be very small.”

She lifted from the bowl a heaping table-spoonful of fondant and put it in a saucer. She poured into a teaspoon a small portion of raspberry extract and added enough coloring to transform it to a bright pink. This was mixed in and the fondant was transformed to a delicate pink.

Another batch was tinted pale green and flavored with pistachio. A pale-yellow batch had the grated rind of an orange for flavoring; to the fondant which was left white was added a few drops of vanilla. Pieces the size of a hickory-nut were flattened and wrapped around a filling, half a candied cherry, half

a pecan or walnut, a shred of fig or an almond. After being rolled they were dropped on parchment paper to dry. "When these harden we will dip them," said Mrs. Griswold; "meantime we will convert the fondant that is left into peppermint drops."

The fondant was put in a bowl and set in the mouth of a tea-kettle — not to melt but to become creamy. Six drops of oil of peppermint were added to it and beaten well, and dropped on parchment paper where it quickly spread out into disks and hardened. Mrs. Griswold used a two-tined fork for dripping.

"Confectioners and cooking teachers," she said, "dip with a copper wire twisted to a loop at the end. I used that till one day with a fine brand of olives came this tiny fork, its tines turned over into claws. I hammered them flat. I have never used the copper wire since. Now watch; you can learn the dipping process in a second."

Mrs. Griswold brought from the stove a small double boiler, the mouth of which held a bowlful of creamy hot chocolate.

"This sweet dipping chocolate," said the teacher, "you can buy at a confectioner's for thirty-five cents a pound. This chocolate is too thick; a tablespoonful of oil will make it right."

She added the oil and began work. She dropped a centre of fondant in the chocolate, then fished it out again, its flat side uppermost. It was dropped bottom side down on a sheet of parchment paper. The chocolate began to thicken. As the fork was lifted lingeringly it left the marks of its tines on top.

"That small irregularity," said Mrs. Griswold, "is a sort of trade-mark. It distinguishes fine hand-dipped candy from the brand that is machine-made and machine-dipped. On some we will drop a scrap of ornament, on others blanched almond or a shred of angelica. It must be done, of course, before the chocolate sets. Sometimes I crumble candied roses or violets. Color your fondant pink, flavor it with rose, dip it in chocolate, and then sprinkle with candied rose-leaf crumbs."

"Will we have time for the cake?" asked Margaret.

"Yes, I think so. We can follow our favorite snow-cake recipe. There are whites of eggs left over from the mayonnaise. I brought a pastry bag to decorate it."

Margaret watched eagerly the frosting. Mrs. Griswold dropped the whites of three eggs in a bowl and added two tablespoonfuls of confectioner's sugar, beating it with a wooden spoon. A cup and a half of sugar was added gradually with a few drops of lemon juice between to moisten it. When the frosting was so thick that it remained parted, Mrs. Griswold spread it over the cake. While Margaret held the pastry bag, she scraped in the frosting that remained. It had been colored pink, and when forced in delicate pink roses here and there about the white surface the effect was very attractive.

"Where can I buy a pastry bag?" asked Margaret.

"Save money by making one," suggested her neighbor. "It will cost you twenty-three



PLATE XXXII.—A. Dipping candies in chocolate. B. Bits of holly went on every gift.



cents. Buy a twelve-inch square of rubber cloth, fold it from two opposite corners, and stitch on the machine. You have a triangular bag. Cut off the point and insert a tin pastry tube, then it is ready for a task like this, or for garnishing with whipped cream or mashed potato."

That evening the Christmas gifts were wrapped. The plum puddings were folded in paraffin paper, then in holly-green tissue paper, and tied with narrow ribbon, red as holly berries. Into a dainty bow on top was tied a spray of beautiful holly. The flaky, fragile pâtés were packed carefully in pretty boxes and wrapped up plum-pudding fashion. The candy receptacles were ordinary candy boxes, covered inside and out with holly-green tissue paper, tacked in place with library paste. The bonbons were laid, with paper partitions between them, in the neatest possible fashion. Every box was tied with scarlet ribbon and adorned with a holly sprig.

In the clear, brilliant cold of Christmas morning there were a score of pleasant errands

to go, and a score of times a "Merry Christmas" was spoken.

Which was the most heartfelt? One that was spoken when a young couple crossed a snowy yard. He carried something wrapped in brown paper which looked like a rocking-chair. She held something wrapped in tissue paper.

Mrs. Griswold met them at the door with a "Merry Christmas."

"A Merry Christmas!" cried Margaret. "I bring my love, my gratitude, and appreciation, not on a silver salver, but on a crystal plate. Tucked away into the heart of these sweets lies my first bonbon,—a poor, deformed, freakish thing, badly dipped and lopsided. A year ago I was like that unshapely bonbon; to-day—if I am somewhat like the sightlier, smoother, more gracious ones—I have you, good friend, to thank for it."

"Ah," said Mrs. Griswold, with a laugh, "consider how heartfelt is the satisfaction of a teacher over such a pupil!"

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